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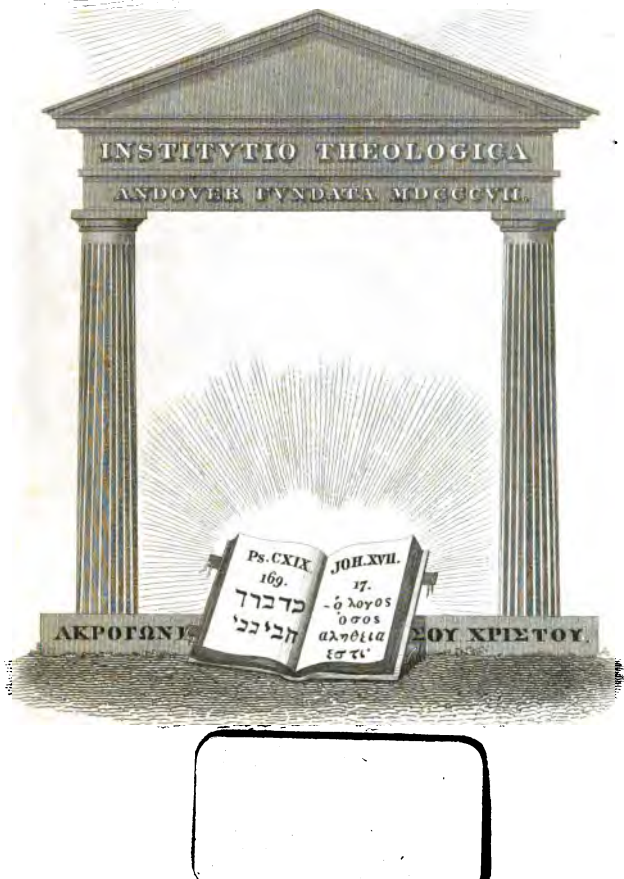


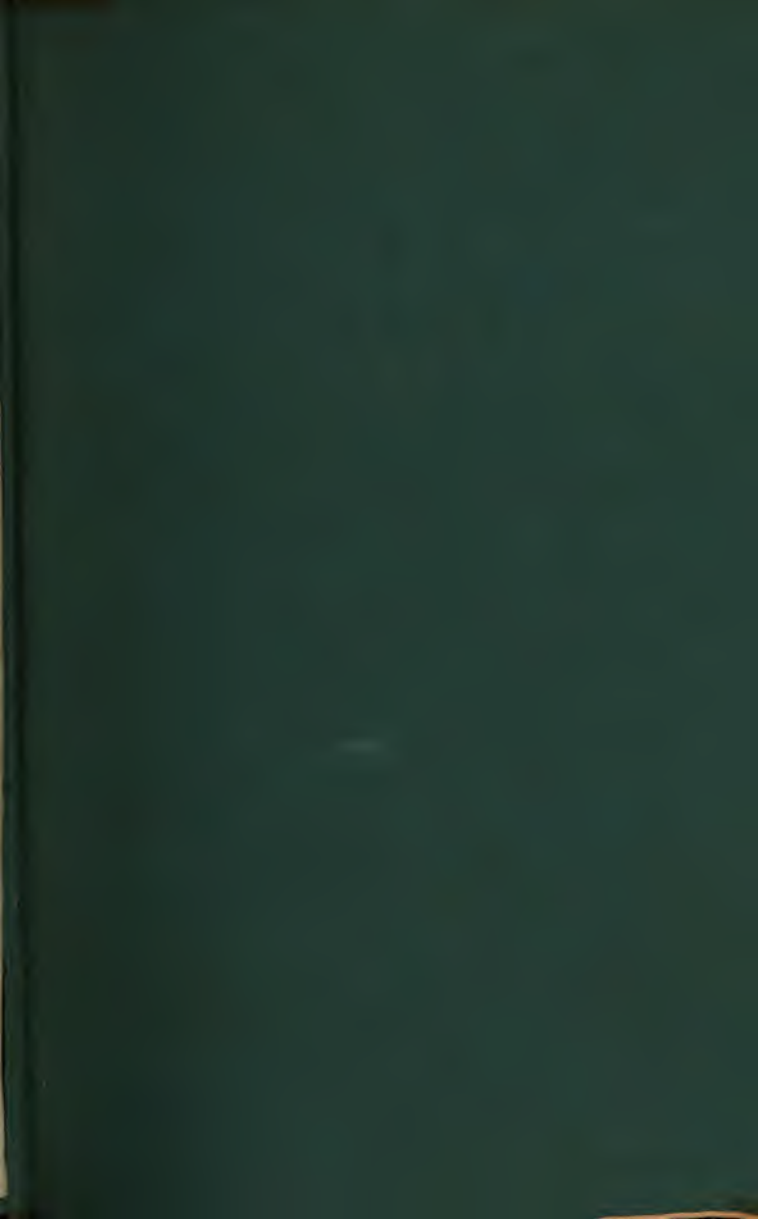
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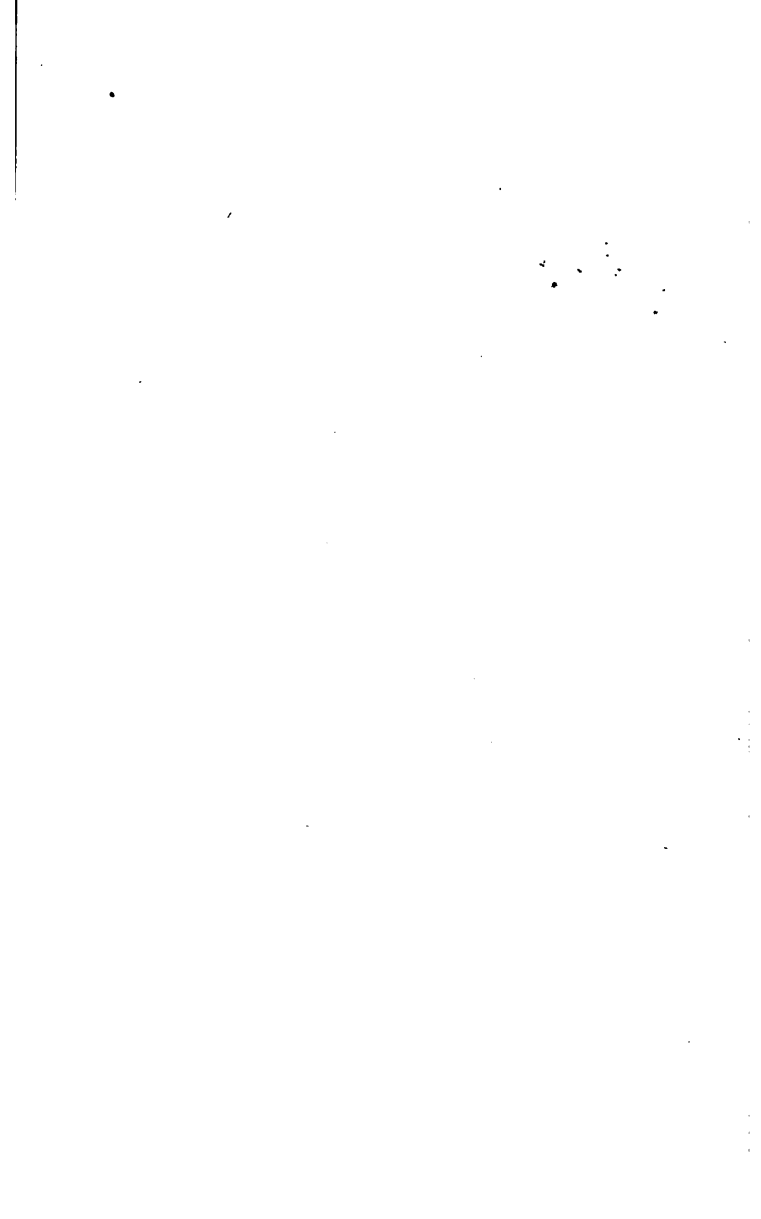
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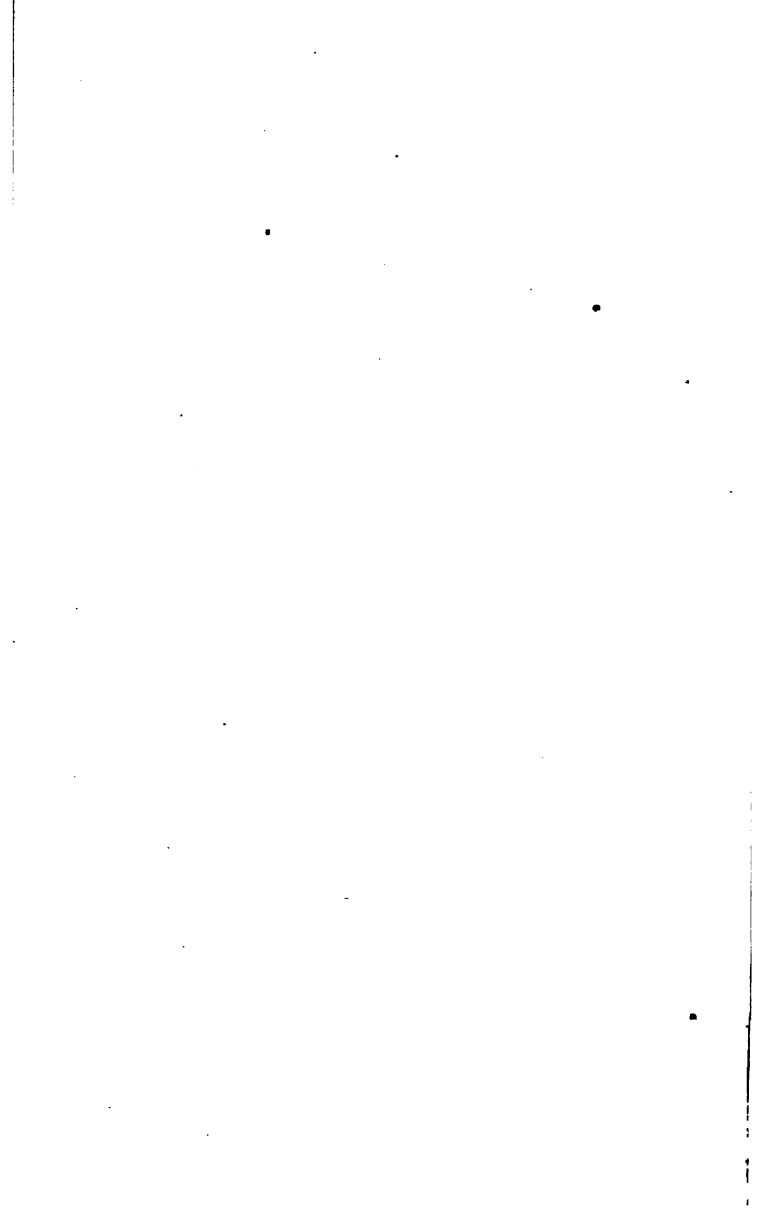
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LIVES  
OF  
THE ENGLISH SAINTS.

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Stephen Langton,  
ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

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MANSUETI HEREDITABUNT TERRAM, ET DELECTABUNTUR IN  
MULTITUDINE PACIS.

LONDON :  
JAMES TOOVEY, 192, PICCADILLY.

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THE LIFE OF

**Stephen Langton.**

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CHAPTER I.

*THE* following pages differ from the preceding numbers of the series, in being almost entirely occupied with the public history of the period. They are not so much a biography of Langton, as a history of the struggle of King John against the Holy See—a contest which ushered in the thirteenth century, and forms the whole history of the reign of that King. Little is often known of the personal history of great Saints. And this is not surprising of men whose “life is hid with Christ in God.” But it is matter of wonder, that so little should be on record concerning that great prelate, who, during a twenty-three years’ occupation of the see of Canterbury, acted in public a more prominent part in national affairs, and in the cloister produced more works for the instruction of his flock, than any who, before or since him, have been seated in that “Papal chair of the North,”—who was the soul of that powerful confederacy who took the crown from the head of the successor of the Conqueror,—and yet, next to Bede, the most voluminous and original commentator

on the Scriptures this country has produced—and who has transmitted to us an enduring memorial of himself, in three most different institutions, which, after the lapse of six centuries, are still in force and value among us—Magna Charta,—the division of the Bible into chapters,—and those constitutions which open the series, and form the basis, of that Canon Law, which is still binding in our Ecclesiastical Courts.

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STEPHEN, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1206—1229, is known by the surname of Langton, from the place of his birth, Langton, near Spilsby, in Lincolnshire. His family, though not illustrious, was sufficiently well known to be appealed to afterwards, in proof of his loyalty to the king.<sup>1</sup>

The persecution and vexation the Church suffered under Henry II., and the consequent insecurity of study, had almost annihilated in England learning, or the means of acquiring it. Oxford and the other English schools were forsaken, and English students spread themselves over Europe in search of that instruction which their own country no longer supplied. But of all the foreign schools, none had such attractions at this period as the rising university of Paris. Bologna might be celebrated for its professors of the new and popular study of canon law; Toledo<sup>2</sup> had caught, from the proximity of the Arabians, some of their love for mathematical science; but the best instruction in all the various branches might be found gathered into one

<sup>1</sup> “In terrâ tuâ natus de parentibus tibi fidelibus et devotis.”  
Epist. Inn. iii. ad Joan.

<sup>2</sup> A. Wood. Hist. Un. Ox. p. 56.

focus in the bosom of this "Instructress of the World."<sup>3</sup> There no art or science was neglected ; but above all in theology, to which arts were but introductory, it was already illustrated by doctors whose fame was maintained in the Sorbonne even to the Revolution. Important cases of conscience were referred to them, as points of law were to the canonists of Bologna. Henry II. offered to submit the question between himself and S. Thomas to the scholars.<sup>4</sup> Popes consulted them ; and the highest praise that could be given to an expounder of doctrine was, "One would suppose he had spent his life at Paris !" <sup>5</sup> It was liberally encouraged by two successive sovereigns, Lewis VII. and Philip II. Thus a concourse of students from all parts of Christendom was drawn together there, such as perhaps was never, before or since, collected in one place for a similar purpose. Hungary and Poland, Sweden and Denmark, countries then almost outside the European world, sent their youth there ; and, from specimens contained within the precincts of the university, a contemporary depicts the character of almost all the nations of Europe.<sup>6</sup>

The distinction which Stephen Langton attained as a teacher, both in the new philosophy of the schools and in the exposition of Scripture, first drew on him the discerning eye of Innocent III. Innocent had himself studied at Paris ; but, having quitted it before 1185,<sup>7</sup> could hardly have been personally acquainted with Stephen. But Innocent ever watched most sedulously over

<sup>3</sup> "Doctrix totius orbis." Rigord.

<sup>4</sup> Rad. de Dicet. ap. Bul. ii. 262.

<sup>5</sup> Hurter Geschicht. Inn. iii., vol. i. 13.

<sup>6</sup> Jacobus a Vitriaco, Hist. Occ. 279.

<sup>7</sup> Du Theil. Vie de Rob. de Courcon.

the place of his early education ; and Langton was one of that class whom it was his object through his long pontificate to draw round him from every part of the Church,—men well trained in school theology without being mere students, and fit for active life without being secularized in principle ; and few men, as we shall see in the sequel, have united in a higher degree than Langton deep theology with practical talent.

That he taught in the university first the liberal arts, and afterwards theology, and that he became a canon of the cathedral church of Notre Dame, is, with one exception, all that is known of his history previous to his going to Rome. That exception is his connection with Fulk of Neuilly, the reformer of the university of Paris ; and it will be necessary to say something more of it.

It will not be supposed that there were not drawbacks to a state of things in itself so admirable as that of the university ; evils which arose from the very zeal of learning and throng of votaries. Its position in the centre (Philip Augustus's wall was begun in 1190) of the richest and most highly civilized capital of Europe, exposed the youth to the usual moral dangers of great cities. And the academicians here were not lodged, as in Oxford, apart in halls or hospitia, but in the houses of the citizens ; and, according to the (somewhat rhetorical, however) description of one who had himself been educated there,<sup>8</sup> in one and the same tenement the business of the schools might be going on in an upper story, while beneath, on the ground floor, were the haunts of vice. Abundance, too, tempted to excess and debauch, and plunged the impatient and tumultuous youth into those serious frays with the townspeople, or between

<sup>8</sup> Jacob. a Vit.

jealous "nations," of which we hear from the very first origin of universities.<sup>9</sup>

But the teacher also had his danger. Love of lucre seduced the more sordid to coin their skill or reputation into gold. Many, again, capable of thoughts above this world, were assailed by the enemy of souls by other arts, to which some of the most illustrious fell a prey. No period of the Christian world has witnessed a greater ferment of intellect, more eager zeal in the pursuit of knowledge, more ardour of scientific inquiry, than did the commencement of the scholastic age. As to the *material* of knowledge, the recovery of the Roman Law, the Græco-Arabian natural history and medicine, and the fresh streams of every sort poured in from the East, opened new fields of attainment, which made the narrow limits of the old Trivium and Quadrivium seem contemptible.<sup>1</sup> And as to the intellectual spirit, a new instrument of philosophical speculation was put into their hands by the Aristotelian logic, capable of application to every subject matter. It seemed for some time doubtful whether, as was the case in the next crisis of thought, three centuries later, this intellectual movement would not carry those who shared in it beyond the definitions of the Faith, and the limits of the Church; and her final and complete victory, by which she enlisted heathen wisdom in her service, was not secured before many, like Arnold of Brescia, had been swept beyond her saving ark into the sea of error. The danger of speculation outstripping the expansion of heavenly verities God averted from his Church by the instrumentality of S. Bernard, and the great school doctors who followed him, as is well known. But the same

<sup>9</sup> Hurt. i. 16.

<sup>1</sup> See Huber on Univ. ch. i.

cause which threatened the Church at large introduced a practical evil into each one of the seats of learning. Indeed, the universities through their whole history, though externally part of the Church system, legislated for by councils, and under the especial patronage of popes, never seem thoroughly incorporated into the Church. They wear an Arabian aspect, or remind us of Athens or Alexandria, the Sophists, and the Neoplatonists. They found their most genial soil in Spain, where, at an early period, elegant literature and profound science reached, in the Hebrew and Moslem universities, a degree of development which those of Christendom only attained within the last three centuries. For the first time in the Christian world, men saw an education, professing to train the intellect, disregarding the discipline of the soul. The highest exercise of the human mind is the contemplation of verities, in which the whole affections of the heart are constantly absorbed. The object of the cloister is to form men to this, the really philosophical mind. The logical, active intellect, which is ever seeking to give reasons for a faith which, during its efforts, is eluding its view, is that which the university tended to foster. Hence the contrast between the old monastic and cathedral schools and the new universities,—hence the struggles in the bosom of the university of Paris between the Dominicans and the secular regents, which fill its annals during the thirteenth century. It is true that S. Thomas subdued even the schools to the obedience of Christ, and made Aristotle, like the toiling genius of Arabian fable, the reluctant slave of a master of another and higher race. But, though philosophy and faith were thus reconciled in the abstract, the universities in practice remained on the world's side. They might teach the *Summa*, but they

sided with Henry VIII. Not only many of the heresies of the thirteenth century sprang directly from them, but, what is more, the whole heretical temper throughout found in them its support and home. A feeling of this evil tendency dictated the founding of the college of the Sorbonne, from which all study save that of theology was to be excluded. "To what end," said its founder, Robert, "serve Priscian, Justinian, Gratian, and Aristotle?" And the whole feeling of religious men in the thirteenth century towards the scholastic philosophy—forced to tolerate it, but watching it with a jealous eye,—was exactly what had been expressed in earlier times towards heathen literature by S. Jerome and S. Gregory.<sup>2</sup>

And accordingly in Paris at this time, all the evil attendant on a disproportionate development of the intellect was rife in the university. Self-reliance and independence of mind, the pride of science, which forgets God,—the conceit of attainments and vanity of display, which contemns men,—with the meaner passions of jealousy, envy, and detraction, were evils most prominent.<sup>3</sup> To combat and correct this intellectual pride, Divine Providence was pleased to make use of the preaching of a humble and unlettered country priest.

"In those days the God of heaven stirred up the spirit of a certain country priest, a simple man, and untaught, Fulk by name, and curate of Neuilly, near Paris. For, as of old he chose fishermen and unlearned, that that glory which was his own might not be given to another; so now, when his little ones were asking bread, but the learned, intent on vain wranglings and

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Hieron. ad Eustoch. i. 51.

<sup>3</sup> Sibi invidabant, scholares aliorum blanditiis attrahebant, gloriam propriam quærentes. Jacob. a Vit.



disputes of words, cared not to break it for them, the Lord made choice of this priest, like a star beaming through a mist, a shower in a long drought, like another Shamgar, to slay many with the ploughshare of skill-less preaching." This man, feeling shame for his ignorance of holy Scripture, determined, old as he was, to do what he could to remedy this defect ; so he began to go regularly into the city to attend the lectures in theology. He frequented the celebrated Peter the Chanter, "of whom, as of a spring of most pure water, the above-mentioned Fulk sought to drink ; so, entering in humble sort the school with his note-book and pen, he carried away some few trite maxims and practical, such as his capacity served him to gather from the mouth of the lecturer. He would oft ponder on them, and commit them firmly to memory : and on the festivals, returning to his parish, he carefully dispensed to his flock what he had thus industriously gathered. And now at first, on the invitation of priests, his neighbours, he began in fear and modesty to deliver in the vulgar tongue to simple lay folk the words he had heard, like another Amos, "a herdsman, and gatherer of sycamore fruit."<sup>4</sup> His discerning master, noting his poor and illiterate pupil's zeal and fervour, and embracing with the bowels of love his faith and devotion, compelled him to preach before himself and divers learned scholars at Paris, in the church of St. Severin. And the Lord gave to his new knight so great grace and power, that both his master and the rest also testified that the Holy Spirit spake in and through him ; and thenceforward others, teachers and learners alike, began to flock to his rude and simple preaching. One

<sup>4</sup> Amos, vii. 14.

invited another, saying, Come and hear the priest Fulk, who is another Paul.

“On a day when a vast concourse, both clergy and the common folk, were gathered to him in a great square of the city, called Champel, the Lord opened their understandings to understand the Scriptures; and the Lord gave such grace to his word, that many, touched, yea pierced to the heart, presented themselves before him stripped and unsandalled, bearing in their hands rods or thongs, and, confessing their sins before all, submitted themselves to his will and guidance. . . . Such power did the Lord add to his words, that the masters of the university and the scholars, now changing places, brought note-books to his preaching, and took down his words out of his mouth.”<sup>5</sup> Another contemporary adds, “The masters he exhorted to give pithy, wholesome, and profitable lectures, in the fear of the Lord; the logicians also he admonished to put away what profited not, and to retain in their art only what was of good fruit; the decretists he reprovèd for their long and wearisome harmonies of cases; the theologians for their tediousness and subtleties; and so the teachers of the other arts in like manner he rebuked, and calling them off from what was vain and profitless, brought them to teach and handle things necessary.”<sup>6</sup>

Such was the agent in this commotion of spirits that agitated the university in the last years of the twelfth century, a prelude to the greater reformation wrought not long after by Reginald and the Dominican preachers: all of them instruments in God’s hand to save souls from the perils of study; to remind the

<sup>5</sup> Jacob. a Vit. Hist. Occ. p. 281.

<sup>6</sup> Otho de S. Blasio. c. 47.

scholar that the wisdom of the wise and the understanding of the prudent are foolishness in God's sight. And among others who joined themselves to Fulk were the two celebrated Englishmen, Robert de Courcon and Stephen Langton, both of them at different times called by Innocent to Rome, and advanced to the dignity of cardinal.

This was Langton's position at Paris. And when it is added, that he was made a prebend of York, afterwards of Notre Dame, and in 1206 promoted by Innocent to be Cardinal Priest of S. Chrysogonus, all has been told that is now known of him, previous to his election to Canterbury.<sup>7</sup> To see how this came to be, we must now turn our eyes to England — England under John.

<sup>7</sup> Note (b) at the end.

## CHAPTER II.

THE Church and King of those days seem antagonist notions. One can hardly tell how the Catholic Church and a Norman or Plantagenet sovereign coexisted in the same society. Their mutual tendency was to destroy each other. The balance was preserved by an alternation of success. The Church protested, entreated, submitted, secularized herself; would seem for a while identified with the world, and the King was pleased: but the more she yielded, the more he exacted, till some vital point was touched; then a persecution — and a confessor or a martyr was raised up, and the spiritual fire was again kindled, and the lost ground regained. The war which pagan powers had waged against Apostolic doctrine, feudal powers continued against Apostolic polity. England's only martyr from the Conquest to the Reformation fell in that cause, which is the one subject of English church history, the independence of the Spiritual power.

The contrast is heightened by the personal character of these sovereigns. In the annals of all Christian nations we read of no such dynasty of tyrants, unless perhaps the early Merovingian princes. Violence, rapine, cruelty, and lust were their habitual daily occupation. Every passion uncurbed, every foul vice that pollutes humanity was to be found with them. Plucking out eyes, lopping off the hands and feet, were their pastime. Tall of stature, and of great strength, the

truculent and bloodshot eye speaking the habitual excess that fed the corpulent and bloated frame, the king might seem some beast of prey roaming at large, working his will among men, a living embodiment of the principle of evil. The taunt of the King of France on the Conqueror's huge size is well known. At his burial the grave was too narrow, and the corpse burst in the attempt to thrust it in. When Baldwin of Flanders refused him his daughter Matilda, William forced his way into the chamber of the princess, took her by the hair, dragged her to the door, and trampled her under his feet. Rufus's debaucheries are not to be even mentioned, and could not be practised but in the darkness of night ; for it is told, with approbation, of Henry I., that he restored the use of lights in the court. Henry I. and John brought on their deaths by acts of voracious gluttony. It needed little stretch of imagination in the romance writer to fancy Richard feeding with glee on a Saracen's skull.

“ An hot head bring me beforn,  
Eat thereof fast I shall  
As it were a tender chick.”

Ever since their first settlement in Gaul the most part of the Norman dukes had been bastards.<sup>8</sup>

And there was this aggravation in the case, that our kings were not like the early Roman emperors, shut up in their palaces, surrounded and restrained by the etiquette of a civilized court ; the frenzied debauchery of Commodus, or Caligula, or the more refined voluptuousness of Nero, was their occupation, engrossed their thoughts and energies.<sup>9</sup> The Norman king was actual

<sup>8</sup> See Michelet. Hist. de France, vol. iii. 55.

<sup>9</sup> “ It had been in the worst of times the consolation of the

as well as nominal sovereign of his realm ; his own minister, all matters, all persons came under his eye ; his tyranny was exercised not towards the slaves and minions of a palace, but towards the worthiest of his people ; his sensual notions and brutal passions were directed upon the highest interests of policy or of religion. They were all great men, and fought for great matters — wickedness in a truly royal shape.

At the accession of John (1199) the State was predominant. The invigorating effect of the blood of the blessed martyr S. Thomas was passing away. Every success contains the seeds of its own ruin. So noble an example of resisting unto blood for the sake of things unseen, had renovated the spiritual sense of the clergy ; and the sacrilegious murder, by the shock it gave men's minds, arrested them forcibly on the point for which the resistance had been made. But no sooner had revived virtue in the priests, and quickened sympathy in the people, wrought their natural effect—that of giving peace and honour to the Church, than its decline began ; the clergy returned to their secular lives, the king to his oppressions.

In no particular was this oppression more practically felt than in the choice of bishops. The *regale* worked badly here. It was not less an infraction of the Church's rights under wise and religious monarchs, but it was less felt then. The disease insinuated itself under an Edward the Confessor, and developed its virus under a Rufus. The Pope could not have made better bishops than the Conqueror. "Only strive to attain perfection," said Charlemagne to his clergy, "and I will give you

Romans, that the virtue of the emperors was active, and their vice indolent." Gibbon, chap. vi.

most magnificent bishoprics and monasteries.”<sup>1</sup> But now religious men were quite passed by, under the plausible pretext of their unfitness for business, and the most noisy, pushing intriguer among the king’s clerks was preferred. Richard selected for qualifications still less ecclesiastical. When he had to fill up the see of Canterbury while absent on the crusade, he cast his eye on Hubert Walter, bishop of Salisbury. “Hubert was very gracious in the eyes of all the host that lay before Acre, and in warlike things so magnificent, that he was admired even by King Richard. He was in stature tall, in council prudent, and though not having the gift of eloquence, he was of an able and shrewd wit. His mind was more on human than on Divine things, and he knew all the laws of the realm. So that he, with Ralph de Glanville, might be said to rule the kingdom, for Ralph used his counsel in all things.”<sup>2</sup> His essays in school-learning afforded some amusement at Rome. Giraldus, the satirical arch-deacon of St. David’s, makes the Pope (Celestine) say, “Now let us talk of your archbishop’s grammar-learning, how he preached in the synod, and how on Palm Sunday he distinguished the persons in the Trinity.”<sup>3</sup> He adds: “He was indeed a man of a notable activity and spirit, but forasmuch as he was neither gifted with a knowledge of letters, nor endued (I doubt) with the grace of lively religion, so neither in his days did the Church of England breathe again from the yoke of bondage.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ad perfectum attingere studete, et dabo vobis Episcopia et Monasteria permagnifica.—Chron. S. Gall.

<sup>2</sup> Gervas. 1679.

<sup>3</sup> Girald. ap. Dart. Hist. Canterbury.

<sup>4</sup> Giraldus, indeed, retracted in his later years some of the hard things he had said of the archbishop; but his general account is fully borne out by Gervase, who is not unfavourable to him.

Almost one of Innocent's first acts had been to require Hubert to resign the office of High Justiciary which he had held together with his see. But this could but palliate the evil ; it required to be met by stronger and more searching remedies : and an opportunity soon offered. Hubert Walter died in July 1205, to the great relief of the king (John). For, worldly and little scrupulous as this prelate was, his character was so energetic, and his influence and authority so great, that they constituted a check which John could not brook. The acquaintance with state affairs which he had gained as chief administrator during Richard's captivity, and the obligation he had laid John under, as having been the chief means of getting him the crown, contributed to render him independent. No man was more thoroughly aware of the false position which the metropolitan occupied, and his dereliction of his real duty, than that very temporal master himself, to whose service he sacrificed his duty towards his Heavenly Master. "So much for him!" he exclaimed, with a savage laugh, when told of the death of Fitz-Peter, the Justiciary, "the first person he will meet in hell will be my Chancellor, Hubert."

He died at Teynham, in Kent, and immediately on the news reaching Canterbury, before the body was buried, a part of the chapter made a bold and hazardous attempt to vindicate their freedom. The chapter of the cathedral church of Canterbury was composed, it will be remembered, of a prior and one hundred and fifty Benedictine monks. This had been one of Lanfranc's greatest reforms. He had suppressed the Saxon secular canons, and introduced the monastic rule. Such a change was then the greatest benefit that could be conferred on a diocese. They had no abbot ; the archbishop representing the abbot externally, though the internal govern-



ment of the monastery rested with the prior. A party among the monks, chiefly consisting of the younger brethren, held a meeting in the church in the middle of the night, and elected their sub-prior, Reginald, with the usual formalities of chanting the "Te Deum," and placing him first on the main altar, and then on the metropolitan throne. Their haste and secrecy was not with a view to forestal the king, but the suffragan bishops, who never failed on such occasions to put forward their claim. Conscious that their act was irregular, they saw that their only chance was to get a confirmation from the Holy See. They sent off Reginald the same night to Rome, accompanied by several of the monks. He carried letters of ratification under the common seal of the convent, which they had found means to procure, but had taken an oath not to use them, or to conduct himself as archbishop elect without special licence and letters from the convent. But no sooner had he landed in Flanders, than, disregarding his oath, he announced himself publicly as the elect of Canterbury, on his road to Rome for confirmation. He even openly exhibited the letters of election whenever he thought it would serve his cause to do so. He pursued the same conduct on his arrival at Rome, and, as though there had been no hindrance or objection, he demanded immediate confirmation. Something, however, led the court of Rome to suspect irregularity, and confirmation was suspended till further information should arrive from England.

The first person to present himself at Rome was an envoy of the suffragans, maintaining that an election at which they had not assisted was null and void. To put an end, once for all, to a dispute which was renewed on the death of every archbishop, it was resolved that the

question should be now solemnly tried and adjudicated. To give ample time for examining witnesses and collecting evidence, the month of May following was appointed for the sentence.

Meanwhile the news of Reginald's faithless conduct had excited the liveliest indignation among his supporters in the convent of Christ Church. Both parties accordingly agreed to proceed more regularly to a new election, and sent in haste to John for his permission to elect. This was in fact allowing the king to nominate; for the form of permission was always accompanied by a recommendation, which electors very rarely, and under pressing circumstances only, ever dared to disregard. The king's choice was John de Gray, Bishop of Norwich (1200—1214), a courtier and a politician, of useful, rather than splendid talent, and thoroughly pliant to the king's will. The elder and safer party in the convent had by this time recovered their ascendancy; the younger champions of independence were alarmed at their own boldness, and were glad to shelter themselves in silence. The king's mandate was received with obsequious respect, and a ready and even joyful acceptance was affected of a prelate whose character they must have viewed with contempt. He was in the North at the time, engaged on the king's business. On the receipt of the news he hastened to Canterbury, and on the 2nd of December the king himself came there, caused him to be enthroned, and invested with the temporalities.

The convent at home having been thus frightened into submission, it was only necessary to defeat the representations which Reginald and his party might make at Rome. The king kept his Christmas court at Oxford, and from thence despatched a monk of Canterbury, by name Elias de Brantfield, with five companions,

to Rome, furnishing them not only with the expenses of the journey, but also, it was said, with a large sum (eleven thousand marks<sup>1</sup>) to obtain from the Holy See the confirmation of the Bishop of Norwich. But though a body of helpless monks—even so intractable a body as the Christ Church Benedictines sometimes shewed themselves—shrunk before the king's frown, and would willingly have recalled their act; it was now too late, the matter had got beyond their hands. Reginald's election, though irregular, was a fact, and was in court, and so must be disposed of one way or other before any further valid step could be taken in the business.

But the whole of this year was occupied in taking evidence in England on the preliminary dispute between the convent and the suffragans. All this care was used that the point might be set at rest for ever, for it was simple enough in itself. On the 21st of December the court gave its sentence. The suffragans shewed that on three different occasions they had shared in the election of metropolitan. On the other hand, the chapter proved that from remote times the convent had been used to elect, in their own chapter, without the presence of the bishops, and that elections so made had been confirmed. And custom had been ratified by a papal bull which was produced. A definitive sentence was accordingly given, affirming the exclusive privilege of the prior and convent to elect the metropolitan, and forbidding the bishops to make any attempt in future to interfere.

But another and very distinct suit was now to come on—that between the two prelates elect. The case of John de Gray was easily disposed of. While a cause was pending before any court of law, no act which an-

<sup>1</sup> Gesta Innocent.

ticipated that court's sentence was legal. His election, therefore, which took place before the first was annulled, was *ipso facto* null and void. The court was now approaching ground which might involve it with the king of England, and it was necessary to proceed with the utmost circumspection. It was foreseen on both sides that Reginald's election must be annulled when it should come to be tried; and whilst the king's party proposed to take advantage of this to re-elect John de Gray, Innocent saw in it an opportunity for extricating the English Church from the yoke of royal nominations.

In the first ages of the Church the bishop was chosen by the voices of the whole of the flock which he was to govern, laity as well as clergy, under the advice and superintendence of the bishops of the province, or the neighbourhood. S. Cyprian directs,<sup>2</sup> "Take heed that ye observe the Divine traditions and Apostolic usage for the orderly holding of elections.<sup>3</sup> Let the neighbouring bishops of the province assemble to that flock over whom the bishop is to be ordained, and let the bishop be chosen in the presence of the people, which most fully knows each one's manner of life, and is witness of his whole conduct and behaviour." After Constantine, the emperors often interfered in disputed cases; and in the West, from the time of Charlemagne it became an established maxim of the canon law, that no election was valid to which the prince did not give his consent.

Three principal causes may be assigned which seemed to have obliged the Church to submit to this innovation in her practice. 1. The maxim of law, that the right of patronage followed endowment, which was admitted

<sup>2</sup> Ep. 68.

<sup>3</sup> Ordinatio, as *χειροτονία* in the Apost. Can. includes election and ordination.

to encourage private persons to give their property to parish churches, might seem equitably to require to be extended to cathedral churches, which were generally endowed by princes. 2. When ecclesiastical censures were allowed to carry temporal penalties, and spiritual sentences were enforced by the hand of power, the bishop became, so far, a state officer. 3. Under Charlemagne, and in the feudal system, endowments were given by the prince and accepted by the bishop as benefices, property requiring service; and this relation to the king would naturally come to seem to him closer and more binding than the relation of the bishop to his particular flock.

But the utmost extent of interference which the canons approved was a negative one; it made the royal consent necessary to an election independently made. It is needless to say how often this consent was in practice converted into an appointment; but the Church's right to free election was still maintained, even when wholly resigned in fact; the term "canonical election" so often occurring, meaning, as nearly as we can define it, election by the clergy of the Church, in the presence of the people, with the approbation of the bishops of the province, subject to the king's consent. The language of councils is various; sometimes absolutely asserting independence, sometimes absolutely resigning it, and condemning sometimes the prince who gave, sometimes the priest who sought, such appointments. Even in special grants of free election which were sometimes made, care is taken to insert a clause that the king gave the privilege, not as bestowing any new favour, but as chief defender of the Church's liberties.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The evidence on both sides is collected by Gratian (*Distinct. lxxiii.*), who sums up the result much as is stated in the text.

The Conquest made little change in this respect. If we examine such notices as remain of the elections of the ten Norman archbishops who preceded Langton, we shall find that the monks, though they had to contend against the suffragans as well as the king, never failed to claim, often to put in force, their right to election; and even when finally accepting the king's nominee, they proceeded to a fresh election of him in their own chapter. So that a chapter which should seize a favourable opportunity, while the king was absent, or otherwise occupied, of electing a prelate by themselves and should get him confirmed, would, in so doing, be acting perfectly according to law; while on the other hand, the king might, with some colour of justice, complain that such a step was an invasion of a customary prerogative. And this was exactly what fell out in the present instance.

Like all other important causes, this one passed through the searching process and cautious procedure which gave so high a character to the judgments of the court of Rome, and that not least during the time that the presiding judge was one so deeply versed in canon law as Innocent III. That neither the king nor the king's party in the convent might have it in their power to object afterwards that the election had been made without their participation, he summoned both of them to send to Rome envoys with full powers. During the interval, the bishop of Rochester and the abbot of S. Augustine's were to examine all the religious of Christ Church on oath, as to the manner in which the late double election had been conducted. A new deputation of fifteen monks<sup>5</sup> appeared at Rome, entrusted with full

<sup>5</sup> Quindecim. Gesta. duodecim. Paris.

powers over their society in regard of election, and also with the king's promise to accept whoever they should elect; he having, however, it was said,<sup>6</sup> bound them by an oath to choose John de Gray.

When the validity of the sub-prior's election came to be tried, over and above the pleas that it had been made by night, by a minority of the convent, and that not the more judicious part,<sup>7</sup> and without the king's consent, they now added, that they had sent him to Rome only as an envoy to oppose the nomination of John de Gray, binding him by a solemn oath, on pain of damnation, only to make use of the deed of election in the last extremity—i. e. in case the pope should shew an inclination to accept the person proposed by the king. Early in 1207 sentence was given; the first election was pronounced invalid, and the deputies proceeded to a new election. With the fear of the king before their eyes, and aware of his determination in favour of the Bishop of Norwich, they shewed a disposition to re-elect him. But the sentence of annulment which had been pronounced of his first election contained, as usual, a clause forbidding his aspiring in future to the honours of the archbishopric. This obstacle could only be removed by a dispensation. And there were important reasons which determined Innocent not to grant that dispensation. The candidate was one of the chaplains and dependants of the king. The court of the king of England was a bad school for an ecclesiastic. A strange bishop out of the palace of the Frank kings<sup>8</sup> was not more dreaded by the Roman inhabitants of a city of Gaul, than was one of the king's clerks by the Saxon inmates of an English monastery.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. Paris.

<sup>7</sup> Saniori parte.

<sup>8</sup> E palatio.

But not the Church of Canterbury only, but the whole Church of England was delivered bound into the hands of an enemy, if they should have imposed on them, as their chief pastor, one, who on theory renounced his own spiritual authority, and was willing to be forced into a see by the strong hand of power. And such a one as John de Gray, whose only capacity was for the business of the world, would be compelled almost to follow the steps of Hubert, who, as Justiciary and Chancellor, had acted rather as a treasurer or bailiff to the estates of the see, than as a prelate to whom was committed the guardianship of the guardians of souls.

But if De Gray was to be excluded, it was necessary to propose as a substitute one who should be every way unexceptionable—one who, while qualified by character, should be neither unknown nor unacceptable to the king. With this view he pointed out to the envoys Stephen Langton, who, as a native of England, and holding preferment there, had, in this respect, all that could be thought necessary. Even since his promotion to the cardinalate, which had taken place this year, John had himself written to him in very flattering terms, to say, that though he had for some time had his eye on him with the intention of calling him to immediate attendance on himself, he was yet pleased to hear of his high honours. The monks (Elias de Brantfield alone excepted) consented, Langton was elected, and Innocent wrote conciliatory letters to the king and the convent to prepare them to receive the new metropolitan. "The Apostolic See," he told the king "might justly envy his kingdom the possession of a man mighty in word and deed both before God and before man, eminent both for his learning and his life; but his care for the interests of the see of Canterbury had prevailed over personal ties. But that,



in consulting the good of the Church of Canterbury, he had not neglected the king's honour, for the new archbishop was by birth an Englishman of a family known for their fidelity and devotion to him." And he besought him most urgently, "for God's honour and by the intercession of S. Thomas, to spare the liberty of a Church which had endured so many troubles, and to accord his favour to the new primate."

A pope writing to a king in a matter ecclesiastical might well have used a higher tone ; but he thought fit to adapt himself to the gross and worldly views of the monarch. John saw nothing but his will thwarted, and his right, as he thought, invaded. His rage was stirred, and his revenge was prompt. The monks of Canterbury were his first thought, and they were in his power. They had committed treason, he said. They had first made an election without his licence, which prejudiced his prerogative ; and now, when they had received money from his treasury to procure the confirmation of the bishop of Norwich, they had elected instead a known enemy of his own, Cardinal Langton. A knight, Fulk de Cantelupe by name, a ready agent where violence was to supersede law, hastened from his side. He summoned the sheriff of Kent, Henry de Cornhelle, with a party of armed retainers. The monks might prepare for the worst when they saw the men of blood, "who knew not civil usages,"<sup>9</sup> enter the cloister sword in hand. But S. Thomas had taught princes a lesson of policy at least. Even John would not make any more martyrs. Exile was the worst—exile from home—no, out of the kingdom they must go, and that forthwith ; the King would not have *his* abbeys harbour traitors. If they did not move quickly, they

<sup>9</sup> Milites crudelissimi, humanitatis ignari. W.

should be burnt out. In terror and confusion, with no time for deliberation, they complied and withdrew — unadvisedly, it was afterwards thought ; nothing short of actual force should have moved them. Barefoot, amid the tears and sobs of the bystanders,<sup>1</sup> seventy Benedictines and one hundred lay brothers,<sup>2</sup> took leave of their church and cloister, and passed the sea into Flanders ; thirteen, from age or sickness, were unable to accompany them. The monks of the king's party were equally involved in the proscription, but, though driven from the kingdom, they were ashamed to share the refuge of those whose cause they had not shared.<sup>3</sup> For a refuge was prepared for them. The usual landing-place from England was Wissant, between Calais and Boulogne, the port from which Julius Cæsar had sailed. No sooner had they set foot on shore, than they were met by the pious Count of Gisnes. He brought them to his castle, set food before them, served them with his own hands, and provided beasts and waggons to carry them to S. Omer's. O worthy hospitality of the Christian noble ! — careful to entertain strangers ; lending to those of whom he could not borrow again. To S. Omer's these disciples of S. Thomas, treading in his steps, took their way. All along their route the religious of every order issued from their cloisters, with cross, tapers, and incense. Their entry into the city of Audomar, the apostle of Flanders, was a procession. The whole body found entertainment and consolation for twelve days with the brethren of S. Bertin's. The

<sup>1</sup> Cont. Hov.

<sup>2</sup> Chron. S. Bertini. ap. M. & D. iii. 687.

<sup>3</sup> Exceptis nonnullis pestilentibus et dyscolis, qui sicut matrem in tribulatione, sic fratres deseruerunt in peregrinatione. Cont. Hov.

prior, with sixteen of his monks, remained there a whole year; the rest were quartered in the various religious houses of the neighbourhood. Langton afterwards removed them into other monasteries in France. This hospitable conduct was visited upon them by John by the confiscation of all the property they held in England. On the other hand, the Pope rewarded it by a special letter of thanks and approbation.

Meanwhile Fulk and his foreign mercenaries revelled in the cloister of Christ Church. He had the custody or wardship of the goods and lands both of the see and the convent. The lands remained untilled; but even the impious king had, in a way, a respect for holy things; he dared not cause the daily office to cease in the church, which contained the still energizing remains of the holy martyr. The Brabantines might keep guard in the refectory, but pilgrims would still throng to the undercroft, and their prayers would still be heard. A tyrant may persecute the clergy, he dare not interfere with the religion of the people. By the king's order, some religious were transferred from the Abbey of S. Augustine to minister in the cathedral.

Having vented his rage on the monks, John now threatened the pope. "He had been insulted," he said, "by the rejection of the bishop of Norwich, his fast friend, and the attempt to force upon him one Stephen of Langton, a total stranger to him, of whom all he knew was, that he had lived long among his public enemies in France. He could not enough marvel at the thoughtlessness of the Court of Rome herein, that it should so lightly forget how needful to it was his love and attachment, seeing that it drew more abundant revenue out of his kingdom than out of all the countries beyond the Alps." He added: "that he would stand

to the death, if need were, for the liberties of his Crown; and that his unalterable resolve was, not to recede from the appointment of John de Gray, which he had ascertained was for his realm's welfare. If he was not humoured in this matter, he would cut off all communication with Rome; neither should his realm be drained of its wealth, nor his subjects, whether in England, or in any other part of his dominions, seek at a foreigner's hands that justice which his own bishops had learning and knowledge enough to administer."

Innocent was not taken by surprise. Before proceeding so far, he had counted on being opposed with the king's whole strength, and he was ready to meet it. On the 16th of June he consecrated Langton with his own hands at Viterbo. He remonstrated with John "on the violent and unbecoming language in which he had answered his conciliatory application. It was rather to the honour than the blame of Langton that he had devoted himself to study at Paris with such success, that he had attained the degree of Doctor, not only in Arts but in Theology, and that his life agreeing with his learning, he had been promoted to a prebend in that cathedral. His distinction in the university made it incredible he should be unknown to the king, at least by reputation. The King had himself written him letters of compliment on his promotion. The known loyalty of his family, and his prebend in the church of York, which was of much greater value and dignity than that of Paris,<sup>4</sup> were sufficient answer to the charge of his being alien to the king, and the king's realm. There was an unworthy imputation on his personal character, which the king had not thought fit to

<sup>4</sup> Paris was not a metropolitan see till 1623.

write, but had not disdained to suggest through his messenger ; it was so manifestly false, that it was not thought worth while to deny it. Lastly, as to the plea that the king's licence to elect had not been asked : 1. Neither law nor custom required this when an election was made at the Apostolic See ; yet, 2, though the Pope had in this instance plenary power over the Church of Canterbury, he had so far deferred to the king's honour as to make a formal application to the king to send his proctor to the election. And though it was true that the two monks charged with this message had been detained at Dover, their despatches had been handed over to the king's own messengers. And, last of all, after the election, the papal courier had delivered to the king himself letters both of the Apostolic See and of the monks, asking the king's consent to the election. It was impossible, therefore, without injury both to his character and conscience, that the pope could now refrain from confirming and enforcing an election which, both in form and the fitness of the person chosen, was canonical, and that he could suffer the Church of Canterbury to be any longer without a shepherd. Do you, then," he concludes, "most dear son, whose honour we have considered beyond what was needful, shew to our honour at least due deference, that you may deserve more abundantly Heaven's and our grace, lest haply by other manner of conduct you bring yourself into a strait, out of which you may not easily draw yourself. Needs must He prevail to whom is bowed every knee, whose place we, though unworthy, occupy on earth. Be not, then, governed by their counsels who seek to trouble you, that they may the better fish in troubled waters ; but commit yourself to our pleasure in this instance, and it shall redound to

your praise. It cannot be safe for you to withstand that Church for which the blessed martyr and glorious high priest, Thomas, hath newly shed his blood ; since, too, your father and brother, of renowned memory, some-while kings of England, renounced that evil custom in the hands of our legates. If you shall in humility submit to us, we shall take care that no prejudice shall be done herein to you or yours."

This letter to the king was accompanied by others to the barons, and to the bishops. "The present cause," he wrote to the latter, "was not that of an individual, but of the whole Church. In such a cause they should rejoice to suffer persecution, if necessary ; remembering, that blessed are they who suffer for righteousness' sake, when they are tried they shall receive a crown of life. If they had truly at heart the cause of Christ, he would give them strength and fortitude to fear God more than man, and respect their Heavenly King rather than their earthly prince. Let them, with every instance of timely urgency, strive to turn the king away from his purpose, not fearing to offend him for the moment. For such counsellors as should encourage him now in his evil designs, he himself, when he came to a better mind, would ever after hold cheap, but would esteem such as should now suggest good to him."

Towards the end of the year he commissioned the bishops of London, Ely, and Worcester to make a final attempt to soften the king,—to admonish him, for his soul's health, not to fight against God ; empowering them, should he persist in obduracy, to lay the whole of England under an Interdict.

The three bishops obtained admission to the king's presence. They besought him humbly, and with abundance of tears, that having God before his eyes, he

would avoid the shame of an Interdict. He need but admit the archbishop and allow the monks to return, and all would be well. And what was there so great in that? They prayed that for this, He who recompenses good deserts, might be pleased to multiply his temporal power, and bestow never-ending glory after this life. They would have prolonged their entreaties out of love for his soul, but the king broke into one of his furious fits of passion. He cursed the pope and the cardinals, and swore by God's teeth, that if his realm was interdicted he would drive the whole clergy, secular and regular, out of it. He would take all they possessed, and they might go to the pope if they would. And as for the Roman clergy, if he caught any in any part of his dominions, he would pluck out their eyes and cut off their noses, and send them to Rome in that condition, that they might be known there from those of all other nations. And he recommended the three bishops, if they would avoid some such scandal in their own persons, to quit his presence immediately.

The bishops could not doubt John's sincerity in this. His paroxysms of ungovernable rage were terrible. One who knew him when Earl of Mortaigne,<sup>5</sup> describes it as "something beyond anger: his whole body was metamorphosed. His face was drawn up into deep furrows, his eyes gleamed with fire, a livid hue took the place of colour. Well do I know what would have become of the chancellor, if in the hour of his rage he had gotten him between his hands." There was something unearthly in the phrenzy of the Plantagenet princes. They themselves were aware of this, and believed it to arise from a real admixture of demoniacal blood in their

<sup>5</sup> Ric. Divisiens. p. 31.

race. Richard I. used frequently to relate a family tradition, in explanation of the headstrong disposition of himself and his brothers. "From the devil we came," he would say, "and to him we go." There was once a Countess of Anjou of uncommon beauty. She seldom went to church, and even then avoided staying for the celebration of the holy mysteries. The count her husband took notice of this, and suspected something amiss. One day he caused her to be held by four of his guards ; when, not being able to endure the consecration of the host, she rose through the air, leaving her cloak in their hands, and was no more seen.<sup>6</sup>

There is, indeed, a diseased impotence of passion incident to minds withdrawn from the restraint which the presence of equals exerts even over those who have the misfortune to want the self-control that moral or religious habits give. The exercise of despotic authority is a great promoter of this disease. It may be a species of mania peculiar to absolute princes. Cambyses, several of the early emperors of Rome, Nadir Shah, and the Emperor Paul, are cases in point. "The wrath of kings is as the roaring of a lion," says the Book of Proverbs. When Nebuchadnezzar was "full of fury," the "form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego." Such passages might have a terrible reality in oriental monarchs.

One in that condition, however, was not to be reasoned with : the bishops withdrew in haste. They delayed the sentence still, in fond hopes that the royal mind would open to better thoughts. When they could no longer withhold it, they again met, and on Monday in Holy Week (1208), which happened to be the vigil

<sup>6</sup> Fordun. Scotichron. Johan. Brompton.



of the Annunciation, they proclaimed the sentence of general Interdict over the whole of England.

From that moment all spiritual acts must cease ; all visible intercourse between heaven and earth was suspended, and the Church withdrawn from the kingdom, —or rather, its life and soul were withdrawn, while the body remained. As an ecclesiastical act, the features which most struck the minds of the country people were, that the daily sacrifice ceased, the doors of the churches were shut against them ; that the dead were carried outside the town-gates and buried in ditches and road-sides, without prayer or priest's offices. The images of apostles and saints were taken down or veiled ; the frequent tinkle of the convent bell no longer told the serf at the plough how the weary day was passing, or guided the traveller through the forest to a shelter for the night. Religion, wont to mix with and hallow each hour of the day, each action of life, was totally withdrawn. The state of the country resembled a raid of the Danes, or the days of old Saxon heathendom, before Augustine had set up the Cross at Canterbury, or holy men had penetrated the forest and the fen.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Nudata stabant altaria et lugubrem desolationem præferabant ; non assuetorum devota cantuum resonabat modulatio, nec consolatoria campanarum audita est dulcedo.* Coldingham, p. 25.

## CHAPTER III.

AN Interdict, to those who read history with eyes hostile to the Church, must appear the most audacious form of spiritual tyranny ; but, in fact, such persons renounce *any* real application of the power of binding and loosing in Heaven. But even catholic Christians of this day, to whom the Church's power of delivering the disobedient to Satan for the punishment of the flesh, is an article of living practical belief, yet shrink from so sweeping an application of it, and have a secret feeling against the Interdict as a harsh and cruel measure. It is, they say, to involve the innocent with the guilty—nay, rather, to let the guilty escape, and to inflict his punishment on innocent thousands. Indeed we must go further ; for, with the firm belief which those ages had in the real effect of absolution and excommunication, if the Interdict was not completely agreeable to mercy and justice, it was no less than a wanton trifling with the power they believed themselves to hold from Christ. Thus many speak of the pope of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as an ambitious despot, who in his struggle for the mastery with temporal princes was as reckless of the souls of his spiritual troops as Napoleon was of the bodies and lives of his soldiers. With one who entertains such thoughts we care not to argue ; but to the obedient Christian, who loves the Church and her ancient ways, and is puzzled to reconcile the Interdict with her tenderness towards the little ones of Christ's flock, the following may be suggested :—

The Interdict, then, was a measure of mercy, an appeal, on its Divine side, to Providence ; on its human side, to all the generous feelings of the heart. For that age did not doubt that the magistrate, as well as the people, the governor as well as the governed, was subject to the one law of Christ. It could not imagine one moral law for the magistrate, and another for the subject. The one was as obnoxious to sin and error as the other ; and was there to be no one to warn, to rebuke, to recal into the paths of truth the one as well as the other ? Or was the prince alone, whose duties and responsibilities, as they were more and greater, involved more risk of spiritual fall than any, to be the only Christian left without the defence of confession, or the gracious means of restoration provided by penance ? The law of God, the law of the Church, looked at the sin, not at the sinner ; the distinctions of worldly rank are not contemplated in its spiritual jurisdiction. A prince, in becoming a Christian, in entering the Christian society, submits to all its rules, as fully as any other person, and the administrator of those rules is bound to enforce them on the prince as much as on any other. As these rules are only such as are necessary to the end of the Church, the saving the souls of its members, they do not admit in their own nature of relaxation, but are permanent and universal. The submission of the prince to spiritual discipline cannot be altered by the admission of the Church to a place and power in the state, for such submission is of the essence of that discipline. Princes, being Christians, continue liable to sin, to be rebuked, to be excommunicated, to be restored by penance, as much after the establishment of the Church as before.

But the social polity of the middle ages admitted something further than this.

The sovereign power in each state is supreme, and without appeal within its own limits; but beyond these limits it finds itself controlled by a higher power, by international law. This is not a theory, but a fact of universal history: it is a fact in feudal times as well as in modern Europe. Through all the gradations of feudalism the lord, supreme within his own domain, had his peers outside of that domain; so, at the top of the tree, the prince had princes his equals, with whom he had of necessity relations, and to whom he therefore owed duties. Wherever a state-system exists—and it must exist, except in the single case of universal empire—the establishment of the Church must be very imperfect, if it is only set side by side with the civil power within each state, and not also set side by side with the external all-controlling power. It is not enough that national law admit the Church as an element in the state, unless international law admit it as an element in the state-system. The duties of princes towards their lieges become christian, and so must the duties of princes towards one another. Christendom now, as then, forms one system, and acknowledges a common law. Since the beginning of the Protestant religion, international law has been based on morality, and enforced by public opinion; before, it was based on the Gospel, and enforced by the power of the Keys. Ours is entrusted to alliances and compacts, amenable (as bodies) to public opinion alone; theirs to a Christian bishop, bound in conscience and before God to act according to a well-known and well-defined ecclesiastical law. Both agree in admitting, in the last resort, the interference of an armed force to compel submission, or punish flagrant infraction of this common law. They differ in the person whom they constitute

the judge, ours making the courts interested, such — theirs, a synod of bishops, men who could not be interested. As, too, that age considered it the duty of the temporal power in each state to enforce the Church's sentence on the refractory individual, so it equally recognized the power of the whole of Christendom to enforce the Church's sentence on the refractory prince. As the obstinate heretic was considered beyond the pale of national, so the excommunicated prince was beyond the pale of international, law : and as the people then suffered from the spiritual sword, so now, in the parallel case, they suffer from the temporal — from war, whether as soldiers or as invaded.

From the establishment of the Church, it followed that temporal penalties attended spiritual sentences. But spiritual sentences passed against all sin, whether the sinner were prince or peasant ; and in each case carried with them the appropriate temporal penalty. But a respectful distinction was made. A private person, whether baron or knight, or of lower degree, contumaciously refusing satisfaction, was at once excommunicated ; but princes, as entrusted by God with temporal power for the behoof of their people, stood not alone ; other interests were involved in their welfare. Neither people nor prince can sin, so Holy Scripture teaches, without mutually involving each other in the guilt. The sins of David and Abimelech were visited on their people, not on themselves.<sup>8</sup>

As it was more grievous, then, that a prince should

<sup>8</sup> *Quicquid delirant reges, &c.* is a belief of natural religion even. Alexander of Russia, in the inundation which devastated St. Petersburg in 1824, rode into the crowd of sufferers, crying out, " My children, you are suffering on my account. Yes, it is my sins that God thus visits on you." Hurter, i. 378.

sin, as he brought thereby evil on others, and not on himself alone ; so more endeavour should be had to bring him to repentance, more time should be allowed, and the final sentence deferred, in hopes of his recovery by more gentle means. In making, then, an Interdict of the realm or province precede excommunication of the prince's person, it was sought to shew mercy rather than severity, to afflict the body rather than to bruise the head ; to excite the people to general prayer to God to turn the heart of the king, and to appeal to the generous feelings of the prince himself, as the father of his people, not to see them continue in misery through his obduracy. Hence, during the Interdict, fasting and all outward signs of mourning were enjoined. The faithful and the obedient thus mediated between God and the disobedient, and the city was spared for the ten's sake.

Human imperfection, indeed, often found place in the administration of this system. Cardinals were bribed, popes were intimidated, or their legates deceived them, or the legates themselves were cajoled by affected deference on the part of the monarch. But every possible precaution was taken. Through all the gradations of the hierarchy (which followed the pattern of the heavenly)<sup>9</sup> the superior had a power of prohibition on the exercise of excommunication by the inferior ; and the appeals allowed to the metropolitan, and finally to Rome, where a cause was sure of the most patient and thorough investigation, established a system of checks and counterchecks on caprice and indiscretion. Still it was, in the hands of the bad, prostituted to selfish purposes. It was a spiritual weapon

<sup>9</sup> *Ad instar cœlestis curiæ.*

with which hostile prelates fought one another. Instead of being limited to cases of obstinate heresy or perseverance in mortal sin, it was had recourse to on every occasion of difference between the Church and the prince. It was too much used to protect the property of the Church, or the persons of ecclesiastics. In 1196, the archbishop of Rouen laid all Normandy under an Interdict, because Richard had seized on his castle of Roch Andelay, to fortify it.<sup>1</sup> The bishop of Ely did the same to his own diocese, for the sake of annoying the same archbishop, who was at that time opposed to him in the state. The town of St. Omer's was interdicted by the abbot of S. Bertin's, in a dispute about a piece of fen ground. Giraldus relates a sort of ecclesiastical duel that he himself fought with the bishop of S. Asaph, about a church over which both parties claimed to have jurisdiction. The zealous archdeacon sallied out at the head of his clerks, in their stoles and surplices, and lighted candles in their hands, and met the bishop at the entrance of the churchyard. If the bishop began the sentence of excommunication, Giraldus began on his side at the same moment. The bishop delivered a general sentence of anathema ; Giraldus did the same. And so the combatants stood, face to face, for some time, till Giraldus bethought him of the church bells. "The sound of these, when rung against themselves, the Welsh do greatly abhor ;" Giraldus gave the signal, and those within the church began to toll them, whereupon the bishop and his party mounted their horses and rode off as fast as they could.<sup>2</sup>

Familiar, then, as this punishment was to the people

<sup>1</sup> Rad. de Diceto, 694.

<sup>2</sup> De Rebus a se gestis, p. 403.

of England, and softened as was its rigour by the disuse of some of its first accompaniments, there were yet some circumstances peculiar to this present Interdict, which explains the horror by which it was regarded by the people, and hence the secret force by which it at last brought the king to submit. A chronicler,<sup>3</sup> who wrote a century afterwards, bears witness to the impression that this Interdict left, in the words "*Et memoriale hoc jam durat in sæcula.*" 1. Its extent. It was the first and the last which extended to the whole kingdom; Wales and Ireland were expressly included. 2. Its duration, upwards of six years. 3. The strictness with which it was enforced. The ordinary privileges of particular orders were suspended. Among others, the Cistercians, and the order of Grandmont, as their houses were placed in lonely and remote spots, where their chanting could not be generally heard, were allowed exception in ordinary cases of Interdict. The strict care, however, shewn in observing this Interdict, had induced them, at first, to waive their privilege, and comply, like others. But when time went on, and there were no signs of the king's giving way, some of the Cistercian houses, bethinking themselves of this privilege, re-opened their churches, rung their bells, and chanted the offices as usual.

Their motive seems to have been a good one. They urged, in their appeal to Rome, the relaxation of discipline, and indevotion, which such a long disuse of the Divine service occasioned. Indeed, in any monastery, especially of the more severe orders, the change made by the cessation of the daily mass and the hours, must have been nothing less than a total break-up

<sup>3</sup> Hemingford, p. 553.



of their established life, internal and external. Not only was the best part of their occupation gone, but that which supported them under their austerities was withdrawn.<sup>4</sup> Innocent, however, did not allow their claim. It would be invidious, he told them, to the other religious, to whom they ought rather to be an example of severity, seeing they received tithes of their lands. And it was very different allowing them this privilege now, when they had begun by observing the Interdict, from what it would have been had they from the first taken no notice of it. It would have the appearance, both to the king and others, of a slackening zeal on the part of the clergy, and a desire to give up the contest. Not, however, to deprive the monks altogether of the Divine food, or the kingdom of the benefit of the precious sacrifice of the altar, he, on Langton's intercession, so far relaxed the rigour, as to allow the celebration of mass once in the week, in conventual churches, provided the doors were shut to keep out all strangers, no bell rung, and the service only said, not chanted. Even from this indulgence were excepted such Cistercian houses as had broken the injunction.

Practice had established some mitigations, also, in behalf of the poor country folk, and the long duration of this interdict, drew others from the mercy of the pope. Absolution to the dying, and baptism to infants, being sacraments of necessity, were allowed. The mixture for the chrism was prepared by special licence, when what was in use was exhausted. Marriages and churchings took place at the church door; sermons

<sup>4</sup> Propter divinorum subtractionem quidam indevotiores effecti amplius duruerunt. Inn. Ep. xiii. 43.

were preached on Sundays to the people in the open air, when holy water and bread were distributed.<sup>5</sup>

Princes had their own established way of meeting the exertion of spiritual power. No sooner was the sentence published, than John issued orders to the sheriffs to order every priest who should dare to observe it, whether monk or secular, to quit the kingdom. He had learnt this lesson from Philip Augustus, who had done the same eight years before. This, warned by the too precipitate retreat of the monks of Christ Church, which had been at the time generally condemned, the clergy refused to do, and the king's officers did not dare to turn them out of their monasteries by force. All their lands and revenues, however, were seized into the king's hands, the king's seal put upon their granaries and storehouses, and their contents applied to the uses of the exchequer ; the royal reasoning, in this respect, being the intelligible one, that if the clergy would not perform their functions, they should not receive their dues. "You bishops," Philip Augustus, in the same situation, said to the bishop of Paris, "care for nothing so long as you can eat and drink your large revenues ! You heed not what becomes of the poor ! Look you, that I do not strike at your manger, by seizing your goods."

And now began a scene of spoliation, which almost reminds us of the sixteenth century. The wardship of church-lands became an object of competition among the king's friends. Harpy courtiers and needy military adventurers from Poitou, were put in possession of the lands of the bishops and abbeys, the best cultivated in the kingdom. Others were set to sale.<sup>6</sup> Sometimes, an abbot or a chapter would purchase the custody of

<sup>5</sup> Chron. Dunstaple.

<sup>6</sup> Rot. Claus. 107—110.

their own lands. Bare necessities, food and clothing, were ordered to be allowed the clergy out of their own goods. "Reasonable eatage,"<sup>7</sup> was adjudged to be, for a monk, two dishes a day for his dinner ; for a secular priest four sworn men of the parish were to decide what was necessary.

If the parish priest fared better, he was, in another point, open to a peculiar source of annoyance. In spite of all efforts, the bishops had never been able to bring the parish clergy in England to observe continence. The abuse was partially reformed from time to time, but a relapse soon followed. The secular priests at this time, seem to have been living generally throughout the country in a state of concubinage. In Wales, this was the case even with the secular chapters. All these "focariæ" were now, by the king's order, seized and imprisoned. They could not complain of this. The pope would not help them here. Their own canons condemned them. And so the priests were put to the shame and cost of buying them off at heavy ransoms.

The Interdict was a hard trial for the clergy, but a most direct one of their faith and obedience. The dilemma they were in was one in which they could have no doubt what was their duty, whatever difficulty they might feel in following it. "Miserable man that I am," said one in a similar case ; "If I disobey the king I lose my worldly estate ; if I hearken not to my lord the Pope I peril my soul !" The case, indeed, was plain now. There was no plea or subterfuge under which they could refuse to recognize the Interdict. All the higher clergy throughout England, (three bishops, and a few court clerks excepted,) unanimously braved the king's vengeance.

7 Rationabile estuverium.

And this was neither trifling nor transient. As long as a monk kept within his cloister, he might have but one meal a day, but his person was at least safe. But no sooner did he venture to appear abroad, or travel in his religious dress, than he was liable to be robbed and murdered with impunity. General sentence of outlawry was passed<sup>8</sup> against the clergy. Once, in the Welsh marches, a robber was brought before the king handcuffed, who had murdered a priest on the road. "Let him go, he has rid me of one of my enemies," was John's summary sentence. All the kindred who could be found of Langton, and of the three bishops who had pronounced the sentence, were thrown into dungeons, and their property confiscated.

A scholar at Oxford, practising archery, accidentally shot a woman. He immediately absconded. The mayor of the city, with a great posse, came to the inn where he lodged. The delinquent was not to be found, but three students, who were joint occupants of the same inn with him, they seized and imprisoned. John happened to be close at hand, at Woodstock, and he sent immediate orders to hang all the three. This the citizens did, nothing loth. The University complained to Rome ; and the whole body of scholars and masters, by authority of a papal bull, withdrew from Oxford, and were dispersed among the various other schools, chiefly Cambridge, Reading, and Maidstone. A few masters, (for the king had a party here) disobeyed the order, but they were suspended from teaching for three years. In three years' time, the townspeople professed contrition, made submission to the legate, and did penance. Besides satisfaction in money, the more guilty part were

<sup>8</sup> Utlagatio.

required to go barefoot, and in their shirts, with whips in their hands, to each of the churches in the city—one church every day till they had gone through them all—and beg absolution from the priest. And as soon as the Interdict should be removed, they were to attend in the same guise the burial of the three scholars they had hung; for their bodies, like those of all the clergy who died during its continuance, were kept, that they might be buried in the churchyard.

John's hatred of, and violence towards the clergy, did not date from the Interdict. The Cistercians were especially obnoxious to him. For, as the flower of the Church, they attracted the concentrated enmity of the bad. Like the Jesuits now-a-days, they bore the burden of the world's hatred. The wit and malice of the dissolute and profane, discharged itself with aggravated venom on the white monks. Whole heaps of these blasphemous tirades are yet preserved in our libraries. In 1204, in a parliament at Lincoln, the Cistercian abbots, in a body, presented themselves before John, to endeavour to appease his anger. Turning to the men-at-arms, by whom he was surrounded, "Ride them down," he cried. The savage order, unheard of before from the mouth of a Christian prince, was disobeyed.<sup>8</sup>

These violences might be considered the outburst of the uncontrolled passions of a tyrant, but that the very same had been resorted to by a wise and politic monarch like Philip Augustus. But John was not a Philip Augustus. Philip was the slave of passion in one instance; John, at all times, and in everything.

<sup>8</sup> MS. Cott. ap. Dugd. M. A.

Hence, when Philip incurred the censure of the Church, though he had had the support of his barons and whole kingdom, yet he had yielded or been subdued at last. Conscience, it may be hoped, was too strong for him,—for the sympathy of numbers will bear a bad man up in any cause. The usual policy of those who resist the Church has been to enlist the better feelings of the world on their side. But John could not submit to the constraint that this required. He would not even live with his own baronage, and they equally avoided him ; and he only intruded into their castles in pursuit of his adulterous amours. These he followed without disguise and without restraint. There was scarce a noble family but had to revenge the disgrace of a wife, a daughter, or a sister.

He surrounded himself with new men, creatures of his own, adventurers from Poitou and Gascony, — not the Poitevin nobles, for they had drawn off from him as much as the English. As he had no faith in his own barons, he determined to secure them by fear. He sent, accordingly, some of his retainers with an armed force round the kingdom, and exacted hostages from some of the more formidable of them. Such was their fear of the king's power that none dared refuse.

A powerful baron on the Welsh marches was William de Brause ; and his wife Matilda, daughter of a French knight, Bertrand de S. Valery, was even more redoubted than her husband.<sup>9</sup> The terror were they both of the Welsh marauders, whose cupidity was excited by the

<sup>9</sup> Il n'étoit nulle parole de sen baron aviers chou qu'étoit di lui. Chron. Norm. Bene novimus quod non erat in potestate sua, sed magis in potestate uxoris suæ. Lit. Joan. ap. Rymer.

twelve thousand English-bred kine that grazed round the castle of Abergavenny. She boasted that she had cheeses enough laid up in her dairy to supply one hundred men with ammunition for a month, if nothing else could be found to feed the engines with. When the king's servants came to her for hostages, she asked what had become of Arthur of Bretagne? Did they think she would give up her son to one who had taken such poor care of his own nephew? John's vengeance was instantaneous. A body of knights was sent to surprise De Brause in his castle. He had barely time to fly into Ireland with his wife and children. The latter fell into John's hands during his Irish expedition. He imprisoned them at Windsor, where he starved them to death.

But, notwithstanding all his violence, John had misgivings. He knew he was not so strong as he seemed to be. The badness of his title to the crown was always before him. He suspected his barons; he thought they were practising in secret against him. He began to manifest a desire for a reconciliation with the Church, and there were hopes of a speedy recal of the Interdict. Langton himself made an effort to soften the king, and wrote to him, begging him to consider the dishonour he brought on himself by his obstinacy in evil. John answered this letter. He stuck to his point, that Langton had not been canonically elected; but hinted, that if he was disposed to resign all the claims which he might consider himself to have on the see of Canterbury, the king would provide for the honour of that Church in a way, perhaps, not to the disadvantage of Langton: and he sent him an invitation to come over to England, but not as archbishop. This insidious attempt to bribe Langton to give up the point

at issue, by the lure of preferment for himself, was of course rejected.

The king then required the return of the bishops of Ely and Worcester. They came, and waited on the king for eight days, but he would not see them. There was something ominous in this ; he could not yet digest his rage, so they returned. He sent a fresh deputation to Rome, to represent strongly what he called his grievances, but, at the same time, to signify that he was willing, out of his desire for peace, to yield somewhat of what was justly due to him. He would recognize the archbishop, let him return in safety, and restore what had been taken from the see. And even the monks of Christ Church, though they had deceived him so infamously, he would allow to return. But, he said, his mind was still so exasperated against the archbishop, that he could not admit him to his presence. He would hand over to Innocent the crown rights on the temporalities of the see, and begged that the pope himself would invest the archbishop with them.

His agent in this negotiation was, strangely enough, a Cistercian abbot. But he was an abbot of John's own making, and of an abbey of his own founding, so that he was probably an ecclesiastic of a right royal fashion. Only four years before this John had brought some Cistercians from the continent, and settled them in one of the fairest spots on the southern coast rightly named Beaulieu ; it was partly in a transient fit of remorse, partly to expiate the cruel afforesting of the district in which it stood—the New Forest.

Innocent would not discourage any overtures, though attended with such a strange condition. He accepted the regalia, but was careful to protest in his commis-



sion, delegating the power of conferring them to two bishops, that he did so for the sake of peace, and that it was not to be a precedent. He looked forward at this time to the speedy adjustment of the dispute. In writing to the bishops of Ely and London, in June of this year, he answers on several points of ritual, on which they had consulted him, under the hope that all such difficulties would soon be removed.

Strangers, too, interposed their mediation. Henry duke of Saxony, the king's nephew, visited his uncle, and tried to induce him to give way. And the emperor Otho wrote to him with the same object.<sup>1</sup> A second time he sent an invitation to the three bishops, Ely, London, and Worcester, who accordingly came to Canterbury. The King was gone on an expedition into Scotland, but had deputed some, both clergy and laymen, to treat with them. Terms of accommodation were agreed on, reduced to writing, and sealed on both sides. The three bishops and the archbishop were to return to their sees, the lands of which were to be given up to them, and a hundred pounds each given them in part restitution of the intercepted proceeds, and the waste committed.

Here was a new and vexatious source of disagreement. The King thought the bishops ought to be glad enough to get back on any terms, and that he did enough in admitting the archbishop at all, more than which ought not to be asked of him. The bishops would not recede from what had been settled, so the agreement remained null. No doubt John was sincere in wishing a reconciliation ; he was not merely trifling to gain time. But he had no idea of giving up

<sup>1</sup> Ann. Wav.

the point at issue; he would not yield in any such way as should seem to be waiving his absolute nomination. A compromise for the mere sake of peace, unless there was a clear admission that all the steps taken on the Church side were just and right, would now be a throwing away of all the suffering that had been endured.

It might, however, be part of the king's policy to protract matters by negotiation, for all this while excommunication was hanging over him; this was the necessary sequel to the Interdict when resisted. In January 1209, the pope sent notice, according to form, of the impending sentence. He implored the king to "consider how he risked his salvation by his prolonged impenitence. He was truly cruel to himself. The fatherly affection of the pope was hateful to him; but, as a skilful and tender physician, he would not shrink from applying painful remedies, however reluctant the patient might be. If he did not, therefore, follow up the agreement concluded through the abbot of Beaulieu, sentence of excommunication would proceed against him after a delay of three months."<sup>2</sup>

This alarmed John. An Interdict afflicted his subjects, and lowered his own character; but to excommunicate him, was to touch his person. He must then be avoided by all but the utterly abandoned; and even these would feel a superiority over him, as their continuing to associate with him would be a favour: they would become necessary to him. So deep was religious sentiment seated in that age, that even contact with an excommunicate was shrunk from with loathing, as from leprosy. The room, the house, the town,

<sup>2</sup> Inn. Ep. xi. 221.

in which he was, was polluted by his presence; the priest might not offer the holy sacrifice within its walls; the very cup he drank from was unfit for Christian use. When dead, his body was to be buried in rubbish; if forcibly interred in a churchyard, the ground required to be consecrated afresh.<sup>3</sup> The religious instincts of the community thus brought home the sentence even to those who set at nought its spiritual consequences. And as its effects could not be averted, the policy of princes was to hinder its publication or reception within their territories. Henry II. had once hurried over to Ireland, to be out of the way of an excommunication he thought was coming upon him. So now, all the ports were strictly guarded, and every traveller rigorously searched; and the most cruel vengeance awaited any who should bring, pronounce, or act upon, the sentence.

The three months allowed had been long exceeded in continually disappointed hopes of a settlement. A reprieve was again obtained till the octave of S. Michael's. Several messages passed between the king and archbishop, and at last he was again invited to meet the king at Dover, letters of safe conduct being sent him both by the king and some of the barons. With the bishops of London and Ely, he crossed to Dover on the 2nd of October. The king came to Chilham castle, near Canterbury, and sent the justiciary and the bishop of Winchester with certain articles which they were to demand of the archbishop. They were such as he could not agree to, and he recrossed the sea.

The sentence could now be deferred no longer, the Interdict having endured with so much suffering to the

<sup>3</sup> See the law in Decret. Greg. ix. Tit. 39.; for the practice, Hürter. iii. 113.

people for nearly two years. At the close of the year, accordingly, Langton forwarded a bull, which he had before received to that effect, to the bishop of Arras, and the abbot of S. Vedastus, where the exiled bishops of London and Ely were lodged, requiring them to publish the sentence, with the proper forms, in that city. They did so, and sent it to England; but the bishops who still remained there, durst not publish it, and kept it to themselves. The secret got out notwithstanding; men whispered it to one another, under their breath, in the streets or the market; and even so it made no little stir and commotion. Two instances may be given. Geoffry, archdeacon of Norwich, one day sitting at the Exchequer on the king's business, declared in confidence to his colleagues, that he did not think it safe for a clergyman to continue longer in the service of a prince excommunicate; and at once withdrew. He was instantly followed by the king's order, and thrown into a dungeon, with a heavy cope of lead round his neck, and left in that condition to die of starvation.<sup>4</sup> Another of the king's officers, Hugh, archdeacon of Wells, the chancellor, having been put by the king into the see of Lincoln, procured leave to cross into Normandy, under pretext of receiving consecration from the archbishop of Rouen. But he was no sooner safe out of the kingdom, than he betook himself to Langton, at Pontigny, swore canonical obedience to him, and was consecrated by him. The temporalities of the see of Lincoln were immediately seized into the King's hands, and the great seal given to Walter, a brother of John de Gray.

<sup>4</sup> Tam victualium penuriâ, quam ipsius capæ ponderositate. Wend.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE year 1209 closed with the excommunication ; and now there ensued three dismal years of hopeless distress for people and clergy. Hope of speedy redress had hitherto borne them up : but all semblance of negotiation with Rome was broken off ; the ports were strictly guarded to prevent all ingress and egress without the royal licence. Want, distress, and insult, was the daily lot of the clergy, while the supports and occupations of a religious life were withdrawn. Many of the religious houses were quite broken up by the wanton oppression of those who had the custody of them ; and the religious were dispersed over the country, to beg a shelter in other monasteries, or from the charity of the country folk. The bareness of the monastic annals during the latter half of John's reign, as compared with the period preceding and following, bear witness to this persecution. What aggravated their suffering was, that it was not a crisis of national confusion ; a general disturbance, in which all suffered alike, and the excitement of action brought relief. Throughout the kingdom all went on as usual. The king kept court in state at the great festivals. They passed, indeed, without mass or prayer, in the church or out of it ; but the nobles presented themselves to pay their duty, and receive the robes distributed on such occasions ; and woe<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Rex omnibus sese subtrahentibus nocive insidiabatur. Wend.

to him who was suspected of absenting himself out of regard to the excommunication.

John invaded Scotland, Ireland, Wales ; was followed by his feudal tenants, just as his father would have been, and returned with success on each occasion. The intervals of military undertakings were filled up by the usual expedients for extorting money, and attention to the preservation of game. He watched over this with as much jealousy as William Rufus himself. In one of these years, all enclosures within old forest boundaries were ordered to be thrown down ; in another, the game law was, for the first time, extended to birds, and the capture of them prohibited throughout the kingdom.

That all this should go on in the midst of the Interdict, struck the king himself ; and he said one day, in cutting up a fine hart, in his bitter way, "This beast never heard a mass, and yet couldn't be fatter !" Every now and then his savage nature found vent in some particular act of oppression—in torturing Jews, or in sacking a Cistercian convent. The worst barbarities were attended, in the genuine spirit of the ancient tyrants, with mockery and jest.<sup>6</sup>

Never before had a king and his court so long and obstinately set at defiance their own conscience from within, and the religious sentiment of Christendom from without. Henry I. had had the whole of the Norman bishops with him ; Henry II. had been backed by a large party of the clergy both at home and abroad, while S. Thomas was but feebly supported by Rome,

\* The well known ballad of King John and the Abbot of Canterbury, (Percy Rel. ii. 302,) though we have it only in a modern form, well expresses the enjoyment John found in tormenting an ecclesiastic.

and looked at with suspicion by all as high and extravagant in his demands. But John was the open enemy of the whole Church, and made no pretence of favouring any party in it. Even he, however, had his false prophets ready to prophesy good concerning him, and not evil. There is no form of hostility to the Church, from the most rigid puritanism down to avowed libertinism, which is not willing to mask itself under a religious theory of some kind. Among the court clerks was one Alexander, surnamed the Mason. He had studied at Paris, and had some reputation for learning. He now began to preach the doctrine that John was ordained by Providence to be the scourge of his people, whose wickedness it was, and not any fault of the king's, that had brought down this visitation of the Interdict. The king was the rod of chastisement in the hand of the Lord, set up for this end, that he should rule the people with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Further, that the pope had no power to interfere with the rights of kings and temporal lords, or with the rule and regimen of any lay governors whatsoever. The Lord had committed to Peter power over the Church and things ecclesiastical only.

Whether under pretext of some such extreme theory as this, or in open defiance of conscience, and even of decency, many clerks still continued to frequent the court of the excommunicate prince. Among these were even three English bishops. That John de Gray, of Norwich,<sup>7</sup> should be one, cannot surprise us; though it must not be forgotten that the right of nomination was what John was maintaining and the Church was resisting, and the

<sup>7</sup> Norwicensis bestia. Polit. Songs.

character of the particular nominee, however bad, was not insisted on. The other two courtier bishops<sup>8</sup> were both Poitevins, put into the sees of Durham and Winchester, one by Richard, the other by John, for similar qualifications; both were men of ability, knowledge of the world, and of courts. Philip of Durham had been Richard's chaplain, and the sharer of his romantic adventures on his return from Palestine. He died about this time under a special excommunication. More distinguished than Philip was Sir Peter de Roches, of Winchester. He had been a knight, but he soon saw that good as the trade of war was, there was a better for him. The times of fighting-bishops were passing away, now that king Richard was dead, whose military enthusiasm was contagious. Innocent did not encourage them. Philip of Beauvais, who when forbidden to use sword or spear, was fain to content himself with a club, was like to have died in prison after he had been taken in arms by Mercadier. What could Celestine say, when, in answer to his demand that his son, the bishop of Beauvais, should be released, Richard sent him the bishop's hauberk, and begged him to "see whether this be thy son's coat or no?" The wily Poitevin resolved to make his fortune in the political world, and therefore entered the Church. Law feudal and canon law were now gaining a mastery over men, which they had never had since the barbarians came in. Manceuvre began to have the better of force, and the men of words carried it over the men of blows. A century or two later the diplomatists had it entirely their own way; armies became the chessmen of the cabinet; a century earlier, the class was al-

<sup>8</sup> *Episcopi curiales.*



most unknown. Just at this period, was the period of conflict between the two. At a later period such men were lawyers, juris-consults ; at this time they were priests and bishops. Peter de Roches was one of these. In the Holy Land the affairs of the Christians had been entirely in his management for five years ; and we need not be surprised to find him a Crusader. It is true the crafty in general stayed at home to make the most of the absence of the others. But religion was sometimes too strong, even for these.

For, by what may seem to us a strange contradiction, hardly even the worst men in those days threw off their allegiance to the Church. It is not, indeed, uncommon now, in the struggle between the Church and the world, to see a man take part against the Church, and yet continue to think himself, and to claim to be, influenced by religion. But he ranges himself outside the Church, and openly impugns her doctrine and discipline ; whereas, in those times, even such as sided with princes against the Church, placed their hope of salvation in her, and neither in thought or word infringed her unity. Philip of Durham, who braved excommunication in the cause of John, made a pilgrimage to Compostella for the remission of his sins, with the most devout faith. Peter de Roches undertook, in advanced age, the journey to the Holy Land, as penance for the part he took at this time. Even the godless John himself founded three monasteries, besides many other benefactions for his soul's health.

Peter de Roches had no mind to quit the chancery as Geoffry of Norwich had done. There might be an Interdict or excommunication, but some one must direct the writs. He was too fond of "handling the king's

roll”<sup>9</sup> to quit it lightly.<sup>1</sup> Besides those who adhered to the king, there were not above two or three of the bishops remaining in the kingdom. The rest had made their escape to the continent; no easy matter when the king’s officers kept a strict guard at all the principal ports.<sup>2</sup> The poor monks, who had not the means of flying, complained grievously of this desertion.<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, it is with truth that it has been said of the bishops and higher clergy of this period that, “None, generally speaking, stood morally lower than the English. None were more mightily fettered by the spirit of this world; none seem to have given so great offence by their temper and habits of life. Bitter and heart-felt, but justified by abundant instances, is the sorrow with which an English writer, William of Newburgh,<sup>4</sup> exclaims, “To the bishops of our time the world is not crucified, but clings most closely. They say not with the prophet, ‘Woe is me that the days of my sojourn here are prolonged!’ but even a long enjoyment of their eminence seems to them short. Keen is their sorrow when they must perforce take leave of their riches and enjoyments.”<sup>5</sup> And the character which the same writer gives of Hugh Pudsey of Durham, may serve for very

<sup>9</sup> Wintoniensis armiger,  
Ad computandum impiger,  
Piger ad Evangelium,  
Regis revolvens rotulum.” Polit. Songs, p. 10.

<sup>1</sup> Wintoniensis non tam ecclesiastica defensabat, quam regia administrabat. Cont. Hov.

<sup>2</sup> The bishops of Bath and Salisbury appear to have made their peace with the king immediately after the Interdict.—Vid. Rot. Claus. April 10. 1208.

<sup>3</sup> Coldingham.

<sup>4</sup> V. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Hürter. iii. 331.

many of the contemporary prelates ; " A man of much experience in the ordering of earthly affairs, and of ready tongue, though without much learning ; of a most ardent thirst for money, and well acquainted with all the methods of getting it."<sup>1</sup>

Let us turn for a few moments from the dreary spectacle here presented, to one which may in some degree serve as its counterpoise. Pontigny—as it had been S. Thomas's, as it was to be S. Edmund's—was now Langton's chosen refuge and resting-place. S. Edmund, an exile in the same cause, remembered Langton's reception here as a subject of consolation to himself. Here, debarred from a more active sphere, with no prospect (at one time at least) of being permitted to discharge the high and perilous duties to which he had been called, Langton gave himself up to the occupations of a religious life, to meditation and assiduous study of Holy Scripture. " Princes did sit and speak against me, but Thy servant was occupied in Thy statutes ;" for it was probably during these years that he wrote his Commentaries.

Unfortunately these are almost entirely unknown to us, but by the accounts, scanty enough, of early writers. Not that they have all perished—many still remain in manuscript. We can at least judge of Langton's industry by the number of works ascribed to him. A bare catalogue of the titles of these would fill several pages. It is probable that many of these may be erroneously so ascribed ; but it is equally probable that many have perished whose names even are unknown to us. This is an investigation interesting to the antiquary, but not within the scope of this history. Before the Revolution the li-

<sup>1</sup> Newburgh, *ibid.*

braries of Cistercian houses in France teemed with them.<sup>7</sup> They had been propagated, no doubt, from Pontigny ; and in this country they were widely dispersed. But our press in the sixteenth century rapidly becoming Puritan, little of that vast body of theology which the three scholastic centuries had produced, was preserved by it ; while every scrap of that undercurrent of profane and heretical literature, which had before been circulated only in secret, was eagerly treasured up, as it seemed to give an ancestry and antiquity to the new Protestant doctrines. Scurrilous diatribes against the monks, indecent amatory effusions, ribald drinking-songs, mixed with the darker superstitions of the southern heretics, the literature of the tavern and the brothel, were diligently printed and commented on. For even the ages of faith had their irreligious element ; and on this, with the sure instinct of unconscious sympathy, the Reformation fastened. "The Reformers were astonished and delighted to find that three and four centuries before, their ancestors had protested so strongly against the abuses which they had now succeeded in correcting, and they were eager to publish and translate the biting satires by which their sentiments had been bequeathed to posterity."<sup>8</sup>

In the poor relics which the ignorant fanaticism of the sixteenth century has left us, of the once rich stores of English theology, Langton's writings form a considerable proportion. Scarce a manuscript collection of any importance, which does not contain one or more of them. What are ascribed to him may be divided into the following classes :—1. Commentaries on nearly all

<sup>7</sup> Oudin, ii. p. 1697.

<sup>8</sup> Wright, *Introductio* to Walter Mapes.

the books of the Old Testament. There were two very different methods of commenting on Holy Scripture followed at this time in the Latin Church. One originated about this period, being introduced by the new school method. This, so far as it was novel—for in all essentials, and almost in form, S. Augustine is a schoolman—consisted in the application of the syllogism to every subject matter, and, among the rest, to the text of Holy Scripture. Not that the inspired writers were supposed to have themselves written syllogistically, but this was the means by which their sense could be most completely drawn out. A text, a clause, a single word, was taken, viewed in all the various meanings of which it was capable, and conclusions drawn from it under each of these meanings. This process is what is meant by the “scholastic philosophy,” which was a method, and not a philosophical system. To minds not disciplined in a severe logic, such a system of interpretation of Scripture will be wholly unprofitable; but where such a discipline exists as the basis of all education, this rigid accuracy of meaning, and correctness of deduction will be demanded by the mind as the indispensable vehicle of all instruction. Hence a class of commentary began to be written for the use of the universities; or rather, theological teachers read in the schools exegetical lectures on the sacred page (as it was called), many of which were preserved either by their own notes, or by those of their pupils. The skeleton of S. Thomas Aquinas’s lectures on S. Matthew and S. Luke is thus preserved, from notes taken by some hearer. The numerous commentaries of Albert the Great are of this description. This method is intellectual only, and is adapted for learners. Stephen Langton is said to have been among the first who adopted this method

with success.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, as a lecturer in the schools, he had no choice. A teacher must, if he will be listened to, adapt himself to the form which thought assumes in his day. But that it was not that which was most agreeable to himself, we may conclude from the circumstance that far the greater part of his comments belong to the other class.

This, which we may call the *devotional* method, sought to feed and fill the soul with the Divine word, to present a material to the ruminative faculty. The other addressed itself to the intellect, this to faith. It neglected the historical sense, a view of Scripture which it considered Jewish. "If once," says S. Bernard, "thou couldst taste ever so slightly of that 'finest wheat flour,'<sup>1</sup> wherewith Jerusalem is filled, how willingly wouldst thou leave the Jewish literal interpreters to gnaw their crusts alone!"<sup>2</sup> Not that it set aside the historical sense, much less considered it untrue; but it looked on the acts and circumstances of the persons described as done by themselves, and ordered by Providence, with an express reference to the acts of Christ, and the circumstances of his body, the Church, as regulated more by the laws of the unseen, than by those of the material world, the world of time and space. This sense is only to be understood by those whose sight was purged by austere life. It is the wisdom which S. Paul spoke "among them that are perfect." To those whose hearts are absorbed in the world, it seems folly and

<sup>9</sup> Subtiliter secundum modum scholasticæ lectionis exponens. Henricus Gandav.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxlvii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Quam libenter suas crustas rodendas literatoribus Judæis relinques ! Ep. 106. ad Hen. Murdach.

fatuity. Relish for mystical exposition is the sure test of the spiritual mind.

As the other class of commentaries was addressed to the universities, so this was addressed to the monks. They were written chiefly for the use of the cloister. No part of Scripture furnished a more rich subject for devout meditation than the Song of Solomon; none was more frequently and copiously commented on,—the very book which has most signally foiled modern expounders: to this Ecclesiastes and Proverbs were an introduction, as more belonging to practical life. “The words of Ecclesiastes,” says S. Bernard, in the beginning of his Sermons on Canticles, “have, by God’s grace, instructed you to know and condemn the vanity of this world. Your life and manners are sufficiently formed and disciplined by the teaching of the Book of Proverbs. Draw near now to this third kind of food, that ye may prove the more excellent things.”

Not that the other books were unsuited for this purpose. “Yea, all the prophets, from Samuel, as many as have spoken, have foretold of these days.” “But,” says Bede,<sup>3</sup> “if in these books we are careful to follow out only the bare literal sense, as did the Jews, what reproof shall we receive amid daily sins! what consolation amid the gathering afflictions of life! what spiritual doctrine for our guidance through this tangled web! When, opening the Book of Samuel, for instance, we read that Elkanah had two wives, we, whose resolve is to keep ourselves in the state of ecclesiastical life far from the embrace of a wife, how shall we learn aught from this, and the like accounts, I say, unless we know how to extract from them the allegoric sense,

<sup>3</sup> Exp. in Sam. Præf.

which refreshes us, by rebuking, instructing, consoling us ?”

Langton's Commentaries belong mostly to this class, They are the meditations of a mystical mind, addressed to mystics ; a recluse writing for recluses. This character appears also in their being confined to the Old Testament. We do not find anything on the New Testament attributed to him. In the New, as being of itself Christian, the literal sense must be more prominent ; while the Old, if not made Christian by allegory, is, after all, no more than Jewish history. A richness beyond what is common, in his application of parallel passages, is also remarkable. He shews a familiarity with all the less studied parts of the prophetical and apocryphal books, which would well fall in with the account that it was he who first made the division of the Bible into chapters. For such a plan would only originate with a view to a concordance ; and the earliest Concordances were arrangements of parallel passages, dictionaries of the sense, not the words, of Scripture.

It is hard to suppose that one of such an ascetic spirit as these Commentaries evince, should have afterwards been absorbed in the vain pursuits of ambition. It is much more likely, that in struggling for the Charter he was acting from a sense of the duties which his office required of him. Indeed we know, that in later years he thought of giving up his see, and entering a Carthusian monastery, or even of embracing a hermit's life.<sup>4</sup> While archbishop he abstained from eating flesh, at least in public ;<sup>5</sup> “so that,” adds Giraldus, who is

<sup>4</sup> *Anachoriticam solitudinem aut heremiticam, aut Cartusienis carceris austeritatem eligeris.* Girald. Ep. ad Steph. Langton.

<sup>5</sup> *Id. de Statu Menev. Eccles.*



drawing a comparison between him and his great predecessor, "if he did not, like Thomas, expose his life to the swords of the wicked in defence of the Church, it was only because in his case there was no necessity urging him to do so." S. Edmund's recollection of him again at Pontigny may be considered a testimony to his saintliness. However, it is not in this light that he was regarded by the Church. All who mention him draw rather attention to his learning. Gregory IX. describes him as "Stephen of worthy memory, a man preeminently endowed with the gifts of science, and the gifts of grace that come from above."<sup>6</sup> "A most eminent teacher of theology."<sup>7</sup> "Resplendent both in life and science."<sup>8</sup> "At the court of Rome was none greater than he; no, nor his equal in virtue and knowledge."<sup>9</sup> "A good clerk, and of high clergy."<sup>1</sup> These are specimens of the way in which he was spoken of by his contemporaries.

2. The historical writings ascribed to him were probably composed after his return to England. A History of the reign of King Richard, which Higden professes to follow in his account of that reign;<sup>2</sup> a Life of S. Thomas of Canterbury, and a book "Of the Deeds of Mahomet," are also attributed to him.

3. His education at Paris had also made him acquainted with the productions of the French minstrels; and he sought to turn to profit the taste for vernacular poetry which was then growing. One of the earliest miracle

<sup>6</sup> Ep. Greg. ap. Wend. iv.    <sup>7</sup> Albericus.    <sup>8</sup> Emon. Chron.

<sup>9</sup> Matt. Par.

<sup>1</sup> Boins clers est, et de haute clergie. Chron. Norm.

<sup>2</sup> Cujus mores et actus Stephanus Cantuariensis luculenter descripsit. . . . Libellum Stephani cursim studui deflorare. vii. 25.

plays is considered to be his,<sup>3</sup> — a theological drama, in which Truth, Justice, Mercy, and Peace debate what ought to be the fate of Adam after his fall. It is written in Norman-French. Also a canticle on the Passion of Christ, of more than six hundred verses. A sermon (Latin) of his also remains, which consists of an application to the Blessed Virgin of part of a song or romance, (in French,) which we may suppose to have been popular at the time and well known to his hearers.

We return to the course of the narrative.

<sup>3</sup> By M. de la Rue (*Archæol.* xxvi.), but without sufficient evidence. Mr. Price (notes to *Warton* ii. 28) considers it a dramatic disposition of a later poem called “*Chakour d’Amour*.”

## CHAPTER V.

THE Excommunication had now been in force for three years, and John yet made light of it. There was one final measure to be tried, and Innocent had now paused long enough before having recourse to it. Let us not imagine that this was hesitation from indecision or fear. This forbearance of punishment is a peculiar feature of the papal government, and was never more remarkably displayed than by those popes who were most able to inflict it. They manifest a divine patience worthy of the highest power, the representative of that righteous Judge, who is "strong and patient, and provoked every day." They move as under the awful consciousness that their acts will be ratified in heaven.

At the close of 1212, the bishops of London and Ely accompanied the archbishop to Rome, and represented strongly at the Holy See the desolation and ruin to which the kingdom was brought. It was not only the suffering of so many innocent persons, clergy and laity, the affliction of a considerable part of the Church, that called loudly on the father and guardian of the Church for aid; but a public scandal to the whole of Christendom, an evil example to the other princes, and a rank offence to all Christian nations. England was fast becoming a heathen country; Christianity and the teachers of it were proscribed; even common justice, humanity, and right were violated: and of all this the king was the sole cause.

A formal sentence was accordingly given by the Holy See, pronouncing John deposed from the throne of England, and empowering Innocent to provide a more worthy successor.

The deposition of a sovereign for misgovernment is always a violent measure ; and the deposition of John, though all England concurred, and all Christian princes approved, was still a revolution. Revolutions have no rules ; but this was as far as possible effected in course of law, and by the only authority that could pretend to any right herein. The pope was then held to be the executive of the law of nations. We are quite familiar with such powers as wielded by secular congresses in modern Europe ; and the living generation has seen an assembly of diplomatists dispose of provinces and peoples, pronounce the *dechéance* of some monarchs, and replace them by others with lavish liberality and uncontrolled power. In the times we write of, monarchy by right Divine had never been heard of ; nay, rather, as Gregory VII. said, "The empire seemed to have been founded by the devil, while the priesthood was of God." But John had not even hereditary right to plead ; he was but a successful usurper : and those who consider the necessity of the case to have justified the measure of 1688, will vindicate the right of the nation in 1213 to call to the throne a grand-daughter of Henry II. in place of a prince who was overturning the laws and religion of his realm.

Such is the political aspect of the case, stated in modern language. It is very certain, however, that Innocent III. in giving, and Christendom in receiving, the sentence of deposition, assumed higher ground than this ; and that was the obligation, held sacred by that age, of maintaining, by the sword if need were,

Christianity against its oppressors, infidel or heretic. "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king over Israel."<sup>3</sup> On this principle war against John became a crusade, and all privileges granted to crusaders were attached to such as should take part in it.

And worse than an infidel he might well be thought by one who considered the events of the last six years. But though it was not generally known at the time, nor till many years later, John had made an express, formal offer to renounce the Christian faith. Doubts have been entertained of the truth of the story, from its being one of the later interpolations in the old chronicle of S. Alban's. Critics, however, have vindicated its authenticity on critical grounds; intrinsic probability is entirely in its favour. A Plantagenet, an Angevin, and son of a princess of Guienne, all John's attachments were to the south—that debateable ground where a degenerate Christianity had ceased to strive with an equally accommodating Moslemism and Judaism. The southern mind then entirely wanted the stern orthodoxy of northern Europe. When in a moment of desperation Philip Augustus exclaimed, "Happy Saladin, who has no pope to interfere with him!" we rightly regard it as the transient outbreak of impatience and vexation. John's embassy to the Emir al Mounemim is a much more deliberate act. Nor again was it, like Francis I.'s alliance with Solyman the Magnificent, which so shocked the religious sense of Christendom, a merely political league, in which, for their mutual interest, the two parties consented to forget their differences of religion. The Saracen emir was making rapid

<sup>3</sup> 1 Sam. xv. 23.

conquests in Spain, and John would have been glad to have been aided by the strong arm, to whomever it might belong. But more rapid than the sword was the silent growth of Oriental, if not Mahometan, religion in these regions. To this secret tendency to a libertinism of opinion, as well as of practice, may be ascribed much of John's fondness for the men of Poitou and Guienne. He was at home with them : they would completely understand the point of many a sarcasm against the clergy which would be lost upon an Englishman. And how significant in this view the care of the legate Nicholas afterwards to force the king to issue a writ to the seneschal of Gascony for the extirpation of heretics in that province !<sup>4</sup>

Nothing is more painful to the historian than the air of apology which the necessity of commenting on acts of past times is apt to assume. It does not need that one have a Catholic bias, but only that one have not the anti-catholic bias, to see that such acts of popes as the one in question are no far-fetched, high-flown usurpations, but only the natural, inevitable results of a public and established Christianity. It is simply an error against the truth of history to speak of the deposition and subjection of John, as has been done, as "an extraordinary transaction." Not only had it, in practice, as much precedent as the nature of the case admitted, but it was the legitimate and consequential application to the particular case of the general principles of the Church which all Catholics allow, and whose operation in that direction has now ceased, only because Christendom has ceased to be. Indeed, our sentiments on this matter are part of the great

<sup>4</sup> Rot. Claus., Nov. 20, 1214.

moral heresy of modern times. Power, according to the modern doctrine, is founded on the moral law. All power which spurns at, or which would emancipate itself from, the moral law, in fact abdicates—becomes noxious to a society of which morality is the rule, and must be put down by that society. Our Europe once was as much at accord as to what was Christianity, as it now is as to what is morality. Are there not symptoms of a third Babel which shall break up this last bond of agreement?

In entrusting the execution of the sentence to the king of France, Innocent selected both an able and a willing agent.

Philip Augustus (1180—1223) was the first monarch of his age. At fifteen years of age he found himself on the throne of a kingdom circumscribed in extent, and wedged in between the dominions of far more powerful sovereigns. The earls of Champagne and Flanders, the count of Toulouse, above all the king of England, lord of the whole coast from Picardy to the Pyrenees, looked down on the poor king of two or three small provinces. The commencement of his reign saw him struggling with some of his own petty vassals, who lived by robbery, and whose strongholds, posted all round it, kept Paris in a state of continual blockade. "One might venture as far beyond the walls as S. Denis; but further than this none durst ride without lance in rest, through the gloomy and perilous forest of Montmorency. In the other direction, the tower of Montlhery exacted a toll. Between his town of Orleans and his town of Paris the king could only travel with an army at his back."<sup>5</sup> In thirty years he had humbled his own vassals, trebled his

<sup>5</sup> Michelet, iii. 17.

dominions, shewn himself a match for Richard, wrested from John every foot of land he possessed on the Continent ; and now, in a parliament at Soissons, proposed to his barons to follow in the steps of William the Bastard, and achieve a second conquest and partition of England. Stephen Langton appeared before them, and produced the bull which he had brought from Rome. The announcement was received with enthusiasm. This was the Monday after Palm Sunday, the anniversary of the Interdict ; and on the octave of Easter they were appointed to have their men ready. The rendezvous was Rouen.

The enterprize, however, promised to be no easy conquest, to judge from John's vigorous measures for meeting it. All the military tenants in the kingdom were required, as they loved the king, themselves, and their property, to present themselves at Dover after Easter, under the penalty of "culvertag."<sup>6</sup> All others in the realm capable of bearing arms, though neither bound by their tenures nor able to provide themselves with arms, were to be armed and paid out of the exchequer. Every vessel capable of holding six horses, in all the ports of the kingdom, was seized for the king's use, and ordered to Portsmouth. All the markets were to be suspended in the towns, and to follow the camp. It gives a great idea of the despotic power of the crown, and the energy of John's administration, to find that the whole male population of the realm were gathered on the coast of Kent. This was in behalf of an excommunicate king at open war with the whole Church. And yet we are apt to fancy that the power of the Church and clergy in those days was inordinate. They formed a multitude so much greater than the neighbourhood had the means of

<sup>6</sup> Turn-tail.



supporting, that the unarmed rabble were immediately dismissed. There yet remained sixty thousand men of the several species of force, ready equipped for service. This imposing array mustered on Barham Down, close to Canterbury ; "a multitude sufficient," says the annalist, "had they been united with one heart and spirit to their king, to have made good his cause against any prince in the world."<sup>7</sup>

But John was not without allies on the Continent ; for there is no man so abandoned, no cause so bad, as not to find defenders, so long as it seems to prosper. Reginald count of Boulogne, a turbulent prince of a petty territory, expelled from France by Philip, was of great service in gaining many lords in the Low Countries. Ferdinand earl of Flanders, Theobald earl of Bar, the duke of Limbourg, the duke of Louvain, the viscount of Thouars, and William earl of Holland, promised or sent succours.

It was a feeble instrument that God made use of to defeat this mighty outfit. But, with a bad conscience within, the feeblest foe becomes formidable. The bishops, the pope, the Interdict, the Excommunication — John had defied them all : the words of a poor rustic reached his conscience, and his resolution all at once failed him.

In the neighbourhood of Pontefract in Yorkshire, a burgh belonging to the great baron Roger de Lasci, the constable of Chester, there lived a simple rustic, by name Peter. He led the life of a hermit, on bread and water. In his own neighbourhood he had the reputation of being a "wise man ;" and he was resorted to by the country folk for the benefit of his fore, or second,

sight. Soon he began to take a wider range ; and he became obnoxious to John "for that he had warned him of many myshappes that hym sholde fall for hys cruелnesse, and for hys fornycacyon . . . . Cryst appeared twice to thys Pyers at Yorke, and ones at Pontfret, and taughte hym many thynges that he told afterwarde to byshoppes and people that were of evyl lyfe. Also in a tyme he laye thre dayes and thre nyghtes as he were in swownying, and was ravished, and sawe the joyes and paynes of good men and of evyl."<sup>8</sup> And now he gave out that John would cease to be king on Ascension Day next ; for that it had been revealed to him in a vision that John would reign for fourteen years, during which he would succeed in all he undertook. John had been crowned on Ascension Day 1199, the fourteen years then expired on Ascension Day 1213.

This prophecy was much bruited about in the north, where it made a great impression. It was at last taken up by the great people, for the northern barons were always the most disaffected to the king. Soon after, John happened to be in that part of the country, on his return from an abortive expedition against Wales. Provoked by new aggressions of the Welsh, he had set out with a large army, determined to exterminate the whole nation. He stopped on his way at Nottingham Castle, where the Welsh hostages were kept ; and, before sitting down to meat, had twenty-eight youths, sons of the first Welsh chiefs, hung before his eyes. During the repast, which followed, came a courier from the king of Scotland, discovering a conspiracy formed against him among the barons ; and at the very same time came in a messenger from Wales, secretly despatched by his

<sup>8</sup> Trevisa's Higden.

daughter,<sup>9</sup> who was married to Llewellyn. He said he brought letters of secret tenor and great import. No business with John ever interfered with the business of the table ; but as soon as his appetite was satisfied he retired, and found, to his consternation, that the letters coming from such opposite quarters agreed in revealing the existence of a widely-spread conspiracy against him. The hermit's prophecy, concurring with this, made a deep impression upon him. He gave up the expedition, and returned in haste to London. But he left special orders to seek out the hermit, and bring him to him. When he came into his presence, the king demanded if he meant that he should die on the day named. The hermit answered, that was beyond his knowledge ; all he knew was, that he should cease to be king on that day, and that he was willing to abide any penalty if it were not so. He was accordingly handed over to Harcourt, the governor of Corfe ; in its fatal dungeon, from which so few emerged alive, to wait the result. This very imprisonment gave vogue and currency to his prediction, which raised no little ferment in men's minds.

Fear had brought his vassals round him, but John knew that he could not depend on their fidelity. Perhaps too, in his extremity, he wished to fall into the hands of God rather than into those of men. He was lodged at the house of the Knights Templars near Dover, when word was brought him that Pandulph, the legate, was on the other side of the Channel, and solicited an audience. John desired he would come to him without delay. Pandulph represented to him that his

<sup>9</sup> Joan, by some wrongly called John's sister. See Higden Polychronicon, MS. ; Hundred Rolls, ii. 91.

final chastisement was now imminent ; that the king of France lay in the Seine, with a force which, with his disaffected vassals, he could not hope to resist ; that the very nobles who surrounded him had pledged themselves to Philip, under their own hands and seals, and tendered him their homage. But it was not yet too late, repentance and submission would still save him.

He yielded, and swore on the book of the Gospels to submit himself faithfully to the judgment of the Church. Sixteen barons became surety for his fulfilment of his engagement : if he retracted, they were to compel him by force. The substance of this agreement was as follows : — “The king pledges himself under oath, that the bishops, and all other persons, lay or clerical, implicated in the present affair, shall be forgiven, and received and retained *bonâ fide* in his favour ; that he will not hurt nor suffer others to hurt them, nor disturb them in the full exercise of their functions and jurisdiction. He will send them letters of safe-conduct before their coming over. He will restore the lands belonging to their churches, and give full compensation for all waste and damage ; as a first instalment whereof, he will pay down 8000*l.* sterling, to be divided among the archbishop, bishops, and the convent of Canterbury, in several rates and proportions. That he will set at liberty all clergy at present in his prisons, and all laymen who had been imprisoned on this matter. That he will recall the Interdict, or act of outlawry, which he had enacted against divers ecclesiastical persons ; making at the same time, by letters patent, a renunciation of any such right or power against ecclesiastics.”

This agreement was entered into on Monday the 13th of May. The 16th was Ascension Day, the fatal term

fixed by Peter of Pontefract. On the vigil of that day, in a second meeting with the legate, in the presence of the chief nobility of the realm, John executed a deed resigning the crown of England to the pope, and received one in return from the legate, by which he was to hold it as a vassal of the Holy See. "John, by the grace of God, &c. to all the faithful in Christ, &c. We would have it known to you all by this charter confirmed by our seal, that, whereas we have in many things offended God and our mother the Holy Church, and therefore stand much in need of Divine mercy; and whereas we have nothing that we can worthily offer to make due satisfaction to God and the Church; we, willing to humble ourselves for Him who humbled Himself for us even unto death, the grace of the Holy Ghost moving us, and not by force or compulsion of the Interdict, but of our own free will, and by the advice of our assembled barons, do make over freely to God, and his holy apostles Peter and Paul, to the Holy Roman Church our mother, to the lord pope Innocent and his Catholic successors, the whole realms both of England and Ireland, with all the rights belonging thereto, for the remission of our sins, and those of our family living and dead, to receive and to hold the said realms henceforth of him, and of the Church of Rome as its liegeman. . . . In token of this our obligation and grant for ever, we will and appoint, that out of the rents of the aforesaid kingdoms to us belonging, and in lieu of all service and custom which we are bound to do for them (saving the payment of the pennies of the blessed Peter), we will pay to the Roman Church yearly 3000 marks sterling, saving to us and our heirs our rights, liberties, and royalties."

This act is witnessed on the king's part by the arch-

bishop of Dublin, the bishop of Norwich, Fitz-Peter the justiciary, and ten other barons, including such as had all through most warmly espoused the king's cause. This was followed by the usual act of homage done by liegemen to their lords.

Such a surrender was not uncommon in that age. It was an act of piety and humility, the visible homage of temporal power to spiritual, the confession of princes that the powers that be are ordained of God, in the true sense of that text—self-renunciation in a princely shape. To John it was also an act of penance : as a prince he had sinned, as a prince therefore ought he to repent, and he thus accepted, and acknowledged the justice of, the sentence of deposition. What degree of sincerity there may have been, we cannot judge. From time to time, throughout, and on his deathbed especially, he shewed a desire to be reconciled to that Heaven against which he had so grievously sinned. But it is undoubtedly true, that on this occasion the step he took was demanded by his interest. Nothing short of the surrender of the crown to the Holy See could in all probability have arrested the French invasion.

The feast of Ascension was waited for by the king in anxious suspense, in which not only his army, but the whole kingdom shared. The royal tent was erected in the centre of the plain, and heralds made public invitation to the multitudes to join the king in celebrating the feast. And with rejoicings and festivities they kept it, the king enjoying himself in company with the bishops and great lords.<sup>1</sup> But his deliverance inspired no feeling of gratitude. No sooner was the fatal day safely past, than he determined to revenge himself on

<sup>1</sup> Oblectante se et exhilarante cum episcopis et proceribus.  
Cont. Hov.

the cause of his alarm. A messenger was despatched to Corfe, and the hermit and his son were taken from their dungeon, dragged at the tails of horses to Wareham the nearest borough, that their punishment might be more public, and there hanged, as false prophets ; —unjustly so, so judged the wiser part, who said, that, if the events of the preceding days were rightly considered, they would be found to be a complete fulfilment of the prediction.

The legate had succeeded with one king, but a difficult task still remained with the other. He recrossed the Channel, and bore the news to Philip that John had submitted, and that his interference was therefore unnecessary. But Philip was not to be so balked. He had spared neither time, treasure, nor pains to bring that host together, at the pope's bidding ; and, now that the prize was within his reach, it was snatched from him, and he was treated as a mere tool of the pope's to frighten the king of England into submission. Would the pope even reimburse him the sixty thousand pounds he had embarked in the speculation ? This is the evil of enlisting, on grounds of interest, men of the world to serve the cause of the Church. And, to say the truth, notwithstanding Philip's present good disposition towards the Church, he would not have been stayed in this matter, but for the earl of Flanders. He instantly refused to follow in what, he said, would now be an unjust enterprize. The truth was, the earl had been gained over by John, and was in secret treaty with him. "Quit my court," cried the king, "and, by all the Saints in France I swear, either Flanders shall become France, or France Flanders !" This invasion of Flanders furnished an object for his arms, and diverted him from England.

And now the exiles might return. The archbishop and bishops, and a whole crowd of clergy and laity, who had drawn towards the coast to wait the issue of the invasion, now embarked for England, scarcely believing yet the restoration which God had wrought for them, and landed at Dover on the 16th of July. The king had already left it, but they followed him to Winchester. As the little troop of exiles entered that ancient Saxon capital, they were met by the king himself. In the sight of all he threw himself at the archbishop's feet, and with abundance of tears begged for mercy for himself and his kingdom. These happy signs of sincerity and genuine contrition moved the bishops to tears of joy and sympathy, and, raising him from the ground, they placed themselves on either side of him, and in this order proceeded to the door of the cathedral, chanting the fiftieth psalm. Here he was solemnly absolved from the Excommunication, in the open air; all the people standing round, and the iron-hearted nobles weeping at the sight. The doors of the church were then thrown open to the royal penitent, and the archbishop conducted him in. Mass was celebrated in his presence for the first time after many years. After this, he sat down to table with the archbishop and bishops in much gladness of heart and mirth.

Still, all was not settled; the question of restitution was big with the elements of dispute. Letters were sent round to the sheriffs, summoning a jury of five lawful men, with a foreman, to appear at S. Alban's on the 4th of August, to assess on oath the compensation due to the clergy. The meeting was held, but the king was not there; he was on the southern coast, preparing for an invasion of France. He was represented by the bishop of Winchester, and the justiciary; but nothing



was done but to issue a proclamation against the exactions of the forest, and other officers of the king. The forest-laws themselves were severe enough, and the tyranny of those who administered them aggravated them tenfold. The king was in the habit of selling the sherifffdoms, and the sheriff consequently sold the subordinate offices ; but, however many the intermediate hands, at last the price was paid by the unhappy provincials<sup>2</sup> in fees, fines, drink-money, and under various other pretences.

A second meeting, still more fully attended, was held three weeks afterwards at Westminster. The king was again absent. This seemed ominous. The question of restitution was obliged to be again postponed. But the cry of oppression from the country-people now fixed the attention of the synod. The justiciary had been obliged to promise, the last time, in the king's name, that he would observe the laws of his grandfather Henry. This led to an inquiry what the laws of Henry I. meant. The general meaning of the promise was understood, but few perhaps knew anything more about it. To satisfy this inquiry, the archbishop now produced the charter of Henry I. He read and explained it to them. They received it with joy. Here was the very thing they wanted ; the very exactions and evil customs which most galled them now, formally renounced and repealed under the King's own seal : no mere vague, traditional "Laws and Usages of Edward the Confessor," but an explicit statute.

The importance attached to a written charter had been on the increase since Henry I.'s time. The sanctity of written law is a growth of the twelfth century.

<sup>2</sup> *Miseris provincialibus.* Cont. Hov.

Henry might have meant it at most as a declaration of the king's good pleasure for the time being, but it was now on record.<sup>3</sup> The enrolment of writs of the king's court commences with the reign of John. Hitherto there had been no copies taken, and grants and charters had to be continually renewed.<sup>4</sup> The charter was adopted with loud acclamations, and the barons took an oath before the archbishop that they would contend to the death, if need were, in behalf of these liberties.

In the midst of its deliberations the synod was alarmed by the news of the king's approach in a hostile manner, at the head of his retainers. His foreign expedition had been frustrated by the refusal of the barons to follow him. Those of Northumberland had even gone so far as to plead<sup>5</sup> that they were not bound by their feudal tenure to follow him out of England. He determined to punish the more obnoxious of the recusants. With his usual promptness and recklessness of consequences, he set off with such of his own retainers and mercenaries whom he could always draft from the garrisons of his numerous castles,<sup>6</sup> towards the north. Neglecting the assembly at London, he crossed the Thames at Wallingford, and pressed onward on the North road, which then lay through Nottingham. The archbishop followed him, and overtook him at Northampton. He reminded him that it was a violation of the oath which he had taken at his absolution, to make war on any of his liegemen, who had not been con-

<sup>3</sup> The charter of Henry I. opens the "Statutes of the Realm."

<sup>4</sup> The series of "The Charter Rolls" commences in the first of John, the "Patent Rolls" in the third, the "Close" and "Fine Rolls" in the sixth.

<sup>5</sup> Rad. Cogg.      <sup>6</sup> Collectis militum copiis. Id.

demned by sentence in the king's court. Though John had lately submitted to the papal legate, yet remonstrance of this nature from one of his own bishops was new to him. Gone from England, never to return, were the days in which a king would submit to the stern rebuke of a priest of God, as Alfred had submitted to S. Neot. Instead of "the smooth applause which Christian kings are accustomed to expect from their loyal prelates," here was opposition, contradiction. Was this the archbishop's gratitude for being allowed to return? With a shout of passion<sup>7</sup> he declared that he was not going to order the affairs of the realm after the archbishop's pleasure; and the next morning, with the first dawn, he was on the road to Nottingham. Thither the archbishop followed him, and by firmness and temperate remonstrances,<sup>8</sup> prevailed on him to terminate his quarrel with the Northumbrians in the regular way of proceeding by trial in the king's court.

This was in September. At the end of the month arrived Nicholas, cardinal-bishop of Frascati, with a special commission to settle all the matters in dispute between the king and the clergy. He had been despatched from Rome as soon as news of the events at Dover arrived there, and was recommended by Innocent both to the king of France, through whose territory he was to pass, and to the king of England, to whom he was to come as "an angel of health and peace." Wherever the legate was present, the Interdict was suspended for the time; and on his whole route to London, the clergy received him with processions and chaunts, and in their festival robes.

<sup>7</sup> Cum ingenti strepitu. Wend.

<sup>8</sup> Eum rationabiliter arguens. Cogg.

At Michaelmas, the king, in a great synod of the bishops and lords, met him at London. During three days, the points in dispute, and especially the restitution, were discussed. The king repeated in full assembly the act of homage, and paid the first instalment of the annual tribute, one thousand marks. He promised to reform the administration of the county courts, and to set on foot a commission of inquiry into the sums extorted in this way by the county officers ; but it came to nothing. The great difficulty was the question of restitution. The king offered, in plenary compensation, one hundred thousand marks of silver to be paid down, and if by the returns of the commission it should appear that more had been taken away, he was ready to give security that he would, before Easter, make good this to the satisfaction of the legate. To Nicholas this seemed all that could be desired, and his surprise was great to see the coldness and dissatisfaction with which the synod received the offer.

It was no doubt a large sum for the king to pay. The whole amount of the royal revenue for two years was proved by Hubert, when (1196) he resigned the office of high justiciary, to be but one million of marks. On the other hand, we may well suppose that it would be but a pitiful compensation for the waste and damage of six years, when it came to be divided among the whole number of sufferers. Not only had they been kept out of the annual produce of their lands, which had either remained untilled, or gone to those who had the custody of them ; but on their return to their homes they had found their houses and barns burnt, their serfs dispersed, their timber cut down, their herds and flocks disappeared, and their whole lands wasted by wanton dilapidation. This was not merely loss, but was a

prospect of actual starvation. They were returned, but only to want and destitution. The contrast, too, of the condition of such as had purchased immunity by siding with the king, aggravated the mortification. While wandering over the continent, the sympathy of brethren, the consciousness of suffering for Christ, and the hope of a happy return, supported them. The persecution was now past, they were restored, and the heart-sickening sense of desolation had succeeded to the excitement of continually renewed hope. It is easy to think that a religious ought to be indifferent to this world's goods; but the greatest part of these exiles were not religious: and the monk's objects of attachment are few, and therefore strong; and what they had lost was not the superfluities of wealth, but their all.

It must be confessed, however, that this tenacity on the part of the clergy has a very ill look. There was no principle involved. It were to be wished that, like S. Thomas, they had disdained to let money be a cause of discord, above all while the removal of the Interdict awaited the final settlement. Hence we cannot be surprised when we find the king afterwards attempting to buy off the opposition of the bishops, by offering them separately fifteen thousand marks; hoping thus to detach them from the cause of the inferior clergy.<sup>9</sup> The bishops could not give a direct refusal to the king's offer, so they proposed that the decision should be adjourned till the inquest, which was in progress, should be completed. The king readily caught at a proposal of delay, always agreeable to him,<sup>1</sup>—and the more so, as during the sitting, letters were brought from Rome requiring restitution to queen Berengaria, and Simon de Mont-

<sup>9</sup> Ann. Wav.

<sup>1</sup> Dilectam sibi dilationem. Wend.

fort, a subject from which he always made haste to escape.

Altogether the representation made by the new legate of the real state of things in England, had a great effect at Rome. Hitherto Innocent had only heard the king's cause through the medium of the king's clerks—a class not very likely to inspire much confidence. About the end of the year a crowd of English clergy presented themselves at Rome. For though the excommunicated laymen, or who had consorted with the excommunicate, were absolved by their own bishops, ecclesiastics in the same condition could have it nowhere but at Rome. John de Gray and the abbot of Beaulieu were among them. Through them the king petitioned that his person and chapels should never be subjected to an Interdict except by an immediate sentence from the pope. Not only was this granted, but in a letter to the king, Innocent prayed that in any future disagreement with his clergy, the king, instead of taking the matter roughly into his own hands, would refer at once to the Holy See, from whose bounty he might obtain more indulgence than he could by violent acts of power.<sup>2</sup>

The suspicious eye with which the English clergy began to be looked upon at Rome was further augmented by a new dispute which arose between them and the legate. During the Interdict a great many vacancies had occurred in church preferments, including bishoprics and abbeys; and part of the legate's commission had been to provide that they should, as soon as possible, be filled up. Now over and above the confusion attending the Interdict, there was an abiding tendency in the English Church to a state of things which, in the eyes of

<sup>2</sup> Inn. Ep. xvi. 130.

a papal legate, would seem simply laxity and irregularity. The canons of the Church, and the rules of religious orders, were in numberless instances set aside or modified by the peculiar habits of the people. A strict observance of the letter of the rule, not common anywhere, was hardly at any period found in an English monastery. There was a comfortable, accommodating, family way of going on, which long custom had led them to regard as the right of their church. This had its origin partly in the physical insulation of the kingdom—a fact which, with all the multiplied intercourse of modern times, still has an effect—partly in the old Saxon traditions, but chiefly in the way in which the English sovereigns, even the best, looked upon the English Church as *their* church, and the clergy as *their* clergy. In its earliest age, one of the difficulties Augustine and the Roman missionaries had to encounter was a similar feeling prevailing among the British Christians ; and all through its history there has been a secular party who have maintained laxity and licence under the garb of independence. Hence the peculiar jealousy with which clergy and people ever regarded the interference of an Italian legate, and their anxiety that that office, if exercised at all, should at least be exercised by a native bishop. It was humiliating, too, to an archbishop of Canterbury to have to lower his cross before the stranger's ; for, like the fasces of old Rome, the cross of an inferior prelate could not be borne in the presence of the superior, and all gave way before that of a legate.<sup>3</sup>

The Reformation itself, in one view, was but an exaggerated access of the hereditary malady which

<sup>3</sup> Inn. Ep. ix. 238.

had been long kept under by the moral influence of the Holy See. In the tenth and sixteenth centuries, this moral influence was next to nothing; the disease of the centre affected the extremities, and at those two periods the world<sup>4</sup> and worldly men were uppermost.

Thus when Nicholas, to whom English usages were nothing and Catholic rules everything, began to depose abbots for misgovernment,<sup>4</sup> and to fill up churches without regard to the wishes of chapters, and the private arrangements of patrons, the native clergy began to be indignant.<sup>5</sup> There were the old charges; he ordained unfit persons, preferred the king's clerks or his own chaplains.

Unhappily there was too much room for recrimination. They pointed sarcastically to a train of fifty knights, and a long retinue of servants who attended him, and which he had acquired in England. The entertainment to which a legate had a right from the clergy wherever he went, was at all times felt as a burden, but it was ruinous when fifty knights were to be lodged and fed. Still more than the tax on their stores, good men felt the inconsistency of such pomp with the office. With what effect could one, who overnight entered the abbey he was to visit in princely state, and required all the luxuries of a court for his own use, the next day in chapter rebuke the brethren for exceeding their rule, and recall them to their sackcloth and two dishes a day? When in 1204 Innocent sent three legates to endeavour to stem the torrent of heresy in the south of France, they moved from city to city with their rich equipage of

<sup>4</sup> Westminster, Evesham, Bardon.

<sup>5</sup> *Timebant sibi arbores qui inutiliter locum regiminis occupabant.* Cont. Hov.



servitors, fine horses, and rich clothes. They preached, and held everywhere formal disputations to confute the heretics ; they might do so, but the heresy grew and spread daily. They were in despair, and thought of resigning their mission. At Montpellier they fell in by accident with two Spanish travellers. One of them was a bishop. "We know something of this country," he said to them, "and you will never convert this people by words. Your example does more harm than your preaching does good. It is the luxury of churchmen that is their great argument against your religion. Send away your retinue, rid yourselves of your baggage, and oppose the humility of true religion to their false sanctity."

However, the legate Nicholas went on his way in despite of the opposition, and the complaints of the clergy. Some appealed to Rome, but the legate who knew his ground well, and that he was not exceeding legatine powers, suspended them. The archbishop was urged by his clergy to resist what they felt as an usurpation. In January, 1214, he summoned his suffragans to meet him at Dunstable. From this place he sent two of his clerks to the legate, who was at Burton-on-Trent, to announce that he had appealed to Rome, and forbade him, pending the appeal, to institute clerks into the vacant churches within his province, contrary to the rights and honour of the see of Canterbury. The legate paid no attention to this, but proceeded as before. He sent, however, Pandulph to Rome to vindicate his conduct to the pope. The archbishop made choice of his brother, Simon Langton, for his envoy.

Thus Innocent was called on for an exercise of judgment in one of those difficult cases so often presented to the Holy See—that of deciding between two opposite

statements made by men who, by station, character, and experience, were both equally entitled to credence. The legate gave the highest accounts of John's dispositions and sincerity. He declared he had never seen a prince so humble and moderate, while the bishops were too covetous and exacting in the matter of the restitution, and shewed an inclination to rob the crown of its just prerogatives. Langton, on the other hand, had to urge that the legate had been gained by the king; that he was, in secret, bartering away the liberties of the English Church, unjustly invading the rights of nations, and only careful to provide for his own family and clerks.

We have no means of deciding in this quarrel where the blame, or most of it, lay. The decision of the Holy See was no doubt founded on as full a view of the case as could be had. No time was lost in fixing the amount to be paid by the king. The claims of the bishops, which had been sent to Rome, having been examined, their indemnity was limited to one hundred thousand marks. But not to postpone the removal of the Interdict, they were to be content with forty thousand paid down, including the sums already received, and the remaining sixty thousand were to be paid by half-yearly instalments of six thousand marks.<sup>6</sup> Innocent delicately reminded the archbishop that he had already, in many things, exceeded his powers—among others, by venturing to relax the Interdict in the royal chapels, and to celebrate in the king's presence; but that he would pass over this violation of order out of his regard for the freedom of the bishops, which he was unwilling should even seem to be trespassed on. On the other hand, the

<sup>6</sup> Wend. compared with Inn. Ep. xiv. 164.

legate received so severe a rebuke for the conduct complained of, that he thought it necessary to return to Rome with all speed.

He did not take his departure, however, till he had recalled the Interdict. About the 1st of July<sup>7</sup> (1214) he summoned the bishops, abbots, barons, and all others concerned in the matter, to London. The restitution was arranged agreeably to the papal award. It was found, however, that even of the sum of forty thousand marks to be paid down, fifteen thousand were not forthcoming. For this, however, the bishops consented to accept the bond of the bishops of Winchester and Norwich, who were absent themselves, having followed the king to Poitou. And then at last, to the great joy of all men, in the church of S. Paul, the legate solemnly removed the Interdict, after it had continued six years, three months, and fourteen days. The aisles of old S. Paul's, so long silent, echoed to the notes of the *Te Deum*, and the bells, that had so long hung mute, proclaimed the happy event to the city and neighbourhood.

Such settlements, after a great convulsion, always leave some wrongs unrighted. Though the exiles had been compensated, those who stayed behind, and had obeyed the Interdict, had also been in no small degree sufferers. The legate had not quitted the synod, when there appeared before him an innumerable multitude of religious of every condition: abbots, abbesses, priors, Templars, and Hospitallers, laying before him all they had suffered in limb and property by the ill treatment of the king's officers. The legate could do nothing for them; he was compelled to reply, that his instructions

<sup>7</sup> *Die apostolorum Petri et Pauli*; Wend. *Crastino Processi et Martiniani*; Wav. *Dunstap*.

made no mention of them or their claim ; and that their only remedy was to apply to the Holy See itself.

Peace, however, seemed now restored to the English Church, and the whole kingdom. The religious might be content to forget their past losses in the prospect of serving God in quiet the remainder of their lives. But the momentary appearance of tranquillity was deceitful, and a severer storm than that now passed over was at hand. We have already seen it lowering in the distance.

## CHAPTER VI.

It is well known, that the one great object of the Great Charter was the protection of the barons, or tenants in chief of the crown. To define what was undefined, to regulate what had hitherto been arbitrary in the feudal system, and to limit the claims of the crown on its tenants, is its principal business. Two other classes, however, are comprehended in its benefits : —

1. The rights and liberties granted by the king to his own vassals were extended to the subvassals, including the inhabitants of cities and boroughs, who were sometimes the vassals, or “men” of the king, but oftener of some lord, or great monastery.
2. The clergy, the bishops and abbots, as holders of fiefs, participated in the liberties granted to such. But the very first clause of the Charter concerned the Church itself, whose well-being was the common interest of all, and did not concern ecclesiastics only. It secured the right of free election to the chapters. “The English Church<sup>s</sup> shall be free, and shall have her whole rights and liberties inviolable ; and we will that this be so observed. And that such is our pleasure appears from this, that the freedom of elections, which was reputed most requisite for the English Church, we did, of our mere and free will, before the quarrel between ourselves and our barons, grant, and by our charter confirm, and did obtain

<sup>s</sup> *Anglicana ecclesia libera sit.*

the confirmation of the same from our Lord Pope Innocent III. ; the same we will ourselves observe, and we will the same to be observed by our heirs for ever."

Excepting the villains, then, every class of society was united in this movement against the king, and the liberties of every class were concentrated. And the villains were not overlooked or omitted, as of no importance, but because in the political system of that time they had no place. Not being "*legales homines*," the Charter, which was a legal act, could not take cognizance of them. Their good treatment depended on the character of the holder of the fief, and was a private duty, of moral and religious, not legal, obligation. This might, then, be a defect in the system, but it is no defect in the Charter, which proposed to restore, not to revolutionise that system.

Thus unanimously called for by the whole nation, and allowed by the monarchs themselves to be equitable, and having for their object simply the putting on record, the making statute, of what had hitherto been custom, and thus putting a limit to exactions which, under pretext of a vague custom, were continually creeping onwards ; it is no wonder that the provisions of the Charter should have been eagerly embraced by the clergy. They saw only the misery and disorder caused by the anarchy into which the existing system, uncorrected, had, in the lapse of time, degenerated. An act of violence or oppression committed at the top of the feudal scale was sure, sooner or later, to descend upon the tillers of the ground ; whoever were the gainers, they were inevitably the sufferers. And when the farmer or the serf suffered, his complaint was carried to the priest of his parish, who alone would sympathise, or perhaps understand his language.

In thus sanctioning and seconding the attempt of the barons, the English clergy overlooked two important points in the case :—1. That even supposing the limits they proposed to set to the king's power to be ever so just and necessary, they were parties, not judges, and that by the recognised law of Christendom the case ought to have been referred to the Holy See for a judicial sentence. 2. That in "moving war" against their lord, the barons were violating the first principle of that very system to which they professed to be appealing, and committing the greatest public crime that a vassal could commit.

These observations were necessary to explain what seems so surprising at first view, that Innocent, who so firmly carried through the late struggle in behalf of Langton against the king, is now found supporting the king, and condemning the archbishop and barons.

It is needless to go through all the steps by which the barons endeavoured to compass the object they had now proposed to themselves,—the confirmation, namely, of the Charter of Henry I. Their slow, timorous indecision contrasts strongly with the active, unhesitating energy of John. They were afraid of the king. Wonderful as this seems, when we find him returning to England after his whole party on the Continent had been broken by the defeat at Bovines (July 27), to see himself equally deserted by the English nobility. He kept his Christmas court at Worcester (1215), but it was blank and deserted, and before the day was over, the king had left the city. While he was resisting the Church, they had thronged around him, in spite of the excommunication; now he was reconciled to the Church, and they shunned him. His partiality to his countrymen sealed his unpopularity. He employed and trusted

them alone. Peter de Roches had been made justiciary, and he was a Poitevin.

“Hoc nocuit Lamiarum cæde madenti.”

But though he seemed forsaken by all, they feared him ; they feared his foreign troops, of whom he had still many in his garrisons. All through the contest, we can see the superiority of the foreigners in arms. Still more they feared his personal character. An utterly unscrupulous man is always formidable. And now, too, they knew that they were in the wrong, and that their present enterprise accordingly was opposed by the pope ; and they were afraid of one another. Living always isolated and independent in their several castles, pursuing singly their selfish ends, each man for himself, the feudal lords had always great difficulty in confederating for any purpose ; each one hung back, waiting for his neighbour to declare himself first. They had meeting after meeting, and oath upon oath, before they dared trust themselves to an open declaration against a king, who seemed without a friend.

On the 7th of January he was in London at the New Temple ; and the barons presented themselves before him, with an insolent display of their armed retainers,<sup>1</sup> and demanded the Charter of Henry I. Resistance was useless, and the king requested delay till Easter. The interval he spent in endeavouring to gain friends and support in various ways. He caused the oath of fidelity, and the homage to himself, to be renewed throughout the kingdom. “Moved by fear, rather than devotion,”<sup>2</sup> he took the cross for the crusade against the heretics of the south, which was then being preached

<sup>1</sup> In lascivo satis apparatu militari. Wend.

<sup>2</sup> Id.



with great zeal both in England and France. In this extremity he voluntarily renounced the claim or abuse of nomination to church dignities—a usurpation which the Norman monarchs cherished among their most valuable prerogatives. He granted a charter to this effect to all conventual and collegiate churches, saving only to the crown the right of custody during vacancy, and the grant of leave to proceed to election. This charter was sent to Rome immediately for ratification, and being accepted there as the final termination of the long dispute, confirmed Innocent in his opinion of the king's sincerity, and his disposition to support him. The liberty thus granted was not a dead letter, for several abbeys which had lain vacant since the Interdict immediately availed themselves of it, and for once exercised, without dispute, the right of free choice of their head.<sup>3</sup>

But the barons persevered. Easter came. The king kept it at Woodstock and Oxford, but his court was thin; and, worst of all, he could not depend even on those who shewed themselves. The earls of Pembroke, Chester, Warenne, and others, remained, but rather for the purpose of using their influence in favour of the confederates, than to support John against them. The archbishop in particular had a difficult part to act. Anxious for the charter, he remained with the king, and did his utmost to induce him to grant it. Nearly the whole baronage of the kingdom in arms, with their retainers, advanced to Brackley, within twenty miles of Oxford. The king sent the archbishop and the earl of Pembroke, and desired to know, "What were the laws and liberties which they sought?" They produced a paper, the heads of which were reported to the king by the archbishop. "And why," said he, with a scornful

<sup>3</sup> Chron. Dunst.

laugh, "do they not ask my kingdom also?" and swore he would never grant them liberties which would make him a slave.

On receiving this answer, they appealed openly to force. They defied the king,<sup>4</sup> and renounced their homage, and erecting themselves and followers into the "Army of God and the Holy Church," gave the command of it to Robert Fitzwalter. Fitzwalter had fled into France in 1212, having become an object of suspicion to John, but had been reconciled to him in the following way:—When the truce with Philip was concluded, after the battle of Bovines, a tournament was held in presence of the two monarchs. In the first course, the English champion, who concealed his name, rode down his French antagonist, horse and man; on which John swore, "by God's teeth, he deserves to be a king who has such a soldier in his train!" The knight was Fitzwalter, and his friends seized the fortunate moment, and reconciled him to the king, who gave him the castle of Hereford to hold. But he was one of the most active in organizing the confederacy, having, if popular tradition may be trusted, private as well as public grounds of hostility to John.<sup>5</sup>

The king had no force with him; but their object was not his person, but his castles. These strongholds covered the country in every direction; and being garrisoned by trained soldiers, under the command of foreigners, were impregnable to a mere feudal force unprovided with engines. Fifteen days were accord-

<sup>4</sup> Regem diffiduciantes. Cont. Hov.

<sup>5</sup> Among other crimes fixed on John by doubtful tradition is the poisoning of Maud, Fitzwalter's daughter; *vid.* Ritson's Robin Hood, p. 19. ●

ingly consumed in a fruitless blockade of Northampton, and the confederates were glad to cover the disgrace of their retreat by the occupation of Bedford, which was betrayed to them. Here they received a secret invitation from some of the principal citizens of London. Marching all night, they entered it in the morning of Sunday, while the forty thousand inhabitants were at mass in its one hundred and twenty churches.<sup>6</sup> Here they replenished their treasury by confiscations of the Jews and the king's adherents; the houses of the former they demolished, and employed the stones in repairing the walls of the city. The Tower was still held by the king's garrison.<sup>7</sup>

From London they sent letters to all the holders of fiefs in the kingdom who had hitherto held back, calling on them to stand with the barons for the peace and liberties of the realm. All who should refuse, they would treat as public enemies. On this, the few who still seemed to adhere to John, forsook him, and his cause became desperate. Excepting the king's foreign garrisons, the whole country north of the Thames was in open rebellion; the Court of Exchequer, and the county courts ceased; none would pay any dues, or acknowledge the king in anything. He yielded a second time, and sent to London, requesting the confederates to fix a day for the interview.

On the 18th of June, accordingly, he descended from his castle of Windsor, to a meadow that lay at its feet, along the south bank of the Thames. To this place the baronial host advanced from their quarters in the city of London. Pavilions were pitched for the king, and the principal parties of both sides, during a discussion,

<sup>6</sup> Pet. Bles., Ep. 151.

<sup>7</sup> Rad. Cogg.

which was prolonged for several days. The scene of the final ratification of the Charter is said to be a small island in the Thames, not far above Ankerwyke, in Bucks, which still bears the name of Magna Charta Island.<sup>8</sup>

Pandulph had assisted at the negotiations; and as soon as they were concluded he was sent to Rome, to relate what had taken place. A second deputation immediately followed him, to urge the nullity of a deed extorted by violence and rebellion, and in disregard of the rights of suzerainty over the realm, which were now vested in the Holy See.

Innocent consulted the cardinals; and on the 24th of August the ambassadors received a bull, which bore that "The king of England had in truth gravely offended against the Church, but had since turned from his evil courses, had given compensation, and had granted a full and entire liberty to the Church of England. The old enemy of man, however, had fomented new disputes between him and his barons. These had constituted themselves judges, as well as parties, in their own cause, and had risen, vassals against their lord, knights against their king, and had not scrupled to league themselves with his avowed enemies, laying waste his domains and possessing themselves, by way of treachery, of London, the seat of the kingdom. Not regarding the king's appeals to the pope, as his liege lord, his offers of submitting to arbiters to be appointed jointly by himself and the barons, and his privileges as having taken the cross, they had compelled him by force and fear to an unlawful composition, derogatory of his royal rights and prerogative. This composition and agreement being in

<sup>8</sup> Manning and Bray, *Hist. of Surrey*, iii.

itself unlawful, the pope, by the authority committed to him, therefore declares null and void."

At the same time he wrote to the barons, urging them "to make a virtue of necessity, and voluntarily to renounce this composition, that so the king might be induced by this concession on their parts to amend, of his own free will, those things of which they complained. To this the pope would endeavour to move him; for as he was unwilling that the king should lose his rights, so he was desirous that he should cease from burdening the barons. Let them, then, during the approaching general council, send duly qualified proctors to Rome, securely committing themselves to the good pleasure of the Holy See; which, by God's good favour, would provide that all disorders and abuses be banished from the realm of England, that the king's honour should be satisfied, and clergy and people enjoy peace and due immunity."

But affairs in England were too far gone to be settled by law, or arbitration. Both parties had hopes of success in their own way; and the voice of a spiritual and invisible power appealing to the conscience of the inner man, was drowned in the external din of arms. The barons knew, that whether absolved or not from his oath, John would never submit to be bound by the Charter; and they saw themselves strong by a rare union among themselves. John, on his part, was bent on revenge for the mortifications to which he had been compelled to stoop, and by the daily influx of foreign soldiers, began to have hopes of soon being a match for his enemy.

Actual hostilities began at Rochester. The archbishop of Canterbury claimed the wardenship of this and the Tower of London, in right of his see, and the

king had put them into Langton's hands : but Langton, seeing that the king occupied himself, ever since the granting the Charter, in preparations for war, suffered William D'Aubigny, with a party of knights, to seize Rochester for the barons.

John had fixed on Dover as the rendezvous of the foreign soldiers, whom his agents were collecting from every part of the Continent, and he spent three weeks in receiving and organizing them.

The soldiers thus obtained were levied among those freebooting bands by whom the whole of Europe west of the Rhine was at this time overrun. When Lewis the Young, attended by most of the great seigneurs of France, was absent in Palestine, bands of depredators began to form in different parts for the purposes of plunder. The withdrawal of the strong hand of the great lords left the country and smaller towns at their mercy. Outlaws, soldiers of broken fortune returning from the crusades, and the restless and lawless of all sorts, contributed to swell their ranks, till, from nightly marauders, they formed themselves in many places into regular bands, which kept together all the year, under a fixed commander. These bands would unite again, and form small armies, for the assault of some town or castle. While there was no war—a thing which seldom happened in the twelfth century—they sheltered themselves in the vast forests which covered so much of the country, and in the more mountainous parts of Auvergne and Burgundy ; the valleys at the root of the Pyrenees swarmed with them. Besides the general appellations of Coteraux and Routiers, they went in different parts of the country by national appellations, as Brabançons, Bretons, . . . It was, in fact, a return to the life of their remote ancestors. The German tribes, who had suc-

cessively overrun the empire, were not nations or clans, but "voluntary and fluctuating associations of soldiers." The Alemanni, the Suevi, the Saxons, the Franks themselves were but bands of warriors united for temporary purposes, assuming the name of some distinguished tribe, and submitting voluntarily to some successful chief, who led them from their woods or marshes to ravage the provinces. In time of war they flocked like vultures to the scene; and princes began to find it convenient to hire them in whole troops into their service. Becket had first suggested this to Henry II. They were more practised soldiers, and more easily held together than the feudal tenants. All they required was pay and plunder; while they had these, their fidelity might be safely counted on. In process of time a kind of military honour arose among them, different from the notions of feudal allegiance. Many of their captains raised themselves to territorial rank by courage and conduct. Like piracy in the heroic times, their profession began to be esteemed honourable. A close friendship existed between Richard I. and Mercadier, a captain of Routiers. Mercadier made his first essay in arms under Richard, when duke of Aquitaine. While Richard was in Palestine, Mercadier remained at home, diligently improving his fortunes. On the king's return, he rejoined his former master, and from that time they became inseparable. The personal prowess and daring hardihood of the freebooter, with a savage barbarity delighting in bloodshed, were qualities congenial to Richard. They rode together, lodged in the same tent, and fought side by side. When Richard received his death-wound Mercadier was at his side, Mercadier's physician attended him, and the cruel revenge he took on the unhappy crossbow-man attested the grief and

rage that afflicted the Routier at the loss of his crowned comrade.

But though useful and acceptable to the great lords, there was a class of society of whom these Free Companions were the terror and the scourge. Unlike the famous English outlaw, they made war on the poor population of the open country and the small towns. They took the corn and cattle of the farmer, and massacred the peasants in sport. The Church then began to interfere. The Lateran council, in 1179, excommunicated all these armed robbers, as well as all lords who should take them into pay, or harbour them on their lands; and enacted that it should be lawful to reduce to slavery those of them who should be taken in arms. The brigands repaid this resistance of the Church by a special fury against the persons and property of the clergy. Neither church nor shrine afforded protection; chalices and altar-plate were a favourite object of rapine, and the most revolting profanities were perpetrated by them. "Wherever they went," says Rigord,<sup>9</sup> "they made prisoners of the priests and religious, dragging them about with them, and calling them in mockery, *chanters*, bade them chant in the midst of their sufferings. Some were so beaten that they died on the spot; others, held in long captivity, returned half-dead to their homes, by ransom. The churches they pillaged; even the Lord's body, which was kept there in silver or gold vessels, for the needs of the sick, they took — oh most grievous! — in hands dyed in human blood, and throwing it on the ground, trampled on it. The linen corporals they made into hoods for their concubines, and with hammers they broke up the sacred

<sup>9</sup> De Gest. Philip. p. 11.



vessels, stripping them of the jewels that enriched them."

As the great seigneurs rather encouraged this pest, the people were obliged to protect themselves. "The Lord<sup>1</sup> heard their cry, and sent them a deliverer — neither emperor, king, prince, nor prelate, but a poor man, named Durant." An association was formed for the extirpation of the plundering bands; its members were called "The Men of Peace." This fraternity gradually spread itself over the centre and south of France, till the Routiers found themselves encircled by a net of armed foes wherever they moved. A war of extermination was waged against them; one by one they were cut off, and on one or two occasions whole armies of them were massacred. At Dun le Roi in Berri, ten thousand of them are said to have been slaughtered by the Brethren of Peace in 1183. Parts of France and the Low Countries, however, continued to shelter considerable bodies of them. From the vast forest of Ardennes they could never be expelled; and numbers began to exercise the profession of robber in a more legal way. Forsaking the forest life, and not disturbing the peace of the country on their own account, these, like the Free Companies of a later age, were ready to engage under any prince for a specified term, during which they fought for him, and plundered for themselves; and when their term of service was expired, retired with what they had gained to their own homes. Thus the Routiers of the twelfth century became, by slow transition, the standing army of the seventeenth.

Such were the materials with which John was now preparing to conquer England. He had begun to be

<sup>1</sup> Grand Chron. de S. Denys.

an outlaw in his own kingdom : nothing remained to him but his garrisoned castles. With a small attendance he shifted from fortress to fortress over the uninhabited downs of Wiltshire, or spent whole nights at sea, not daring to trust himself on land. In September he got into Dover Castle, and every day saw fresh bodies of foreign troops arrive.

The men of Poitou and Gascony, the king's own vassals, were brought over by Savary de Mauleon, whom John had made seneschal of Poitou. The Norman mercenaries were led by Foulkes de Breauté, a captain of Routiers, who was to John almost what Mercadier had been to his brother Richard. A Norman of illegitimate birth, he had entered the service of the king of England with no other possessions than his horse and armour. John soon made him governor of Bedford Castle, and afterwards provided for him by giving him a rich heiress, Margaret de Redviers, in marriage, and entrusting to him the castles of Oxford, Northampton, and Cambridge. "This adventurer," says Matthew Paris, "was known to be ready for any crime. He ever went beyond the orders he received, in the cruelty with which he executed them, which endeared him to the king." But "those who went into the house of God, and saw the end of these men," noted that such instruments of cruelty mostly met with a violent and miserable end. This infamous robber<sup>2</sup> ended his life in banishment and poverty<sup>3</sup> at S. Cyr, fulfilling hereby a vision which the legate Pandulph had concerning him, on occasion of his excesses at S. Alban's. He saw him in a vision standing in the choir of the church, when

<sup>2</sup> Prædo nequissimus. Wend.

<sup>3</sup> Morte miserâ.

suddenly a large stone detached itself from the tower, and falling on his head, crushed him altogether.

Gerard of Sotteghem, and Walter Buck had drawn from Louvain and Brabant bands "who thirsted for nothing but human blood, and neither feared God nor respected men;"<sup>4</sup> but the most important levy was that made in Flanders by Hugh de Boves. This man, "a good knight, but a proud man and a lawless,"<sup>5</sup> was sent over with a great sum of money to co-operate with a certain Robert de Bethune, half freebooter, half seigneur. He carried a sackful of letters of invitation from the king to the Flemish lords, passing them off for lampreys, to withdraw them from the curiosity of the inhabitants of Dover. De Boves durst not land in Flanders for fear of the king of France, but anchoring off Inne, he soon filled a large fleet of transports with recruits. They set sail for England on the eve of SS. Cosmas and Damian, when they encountered the same westerly wind which at the same season, five centuries later, so nearly proved fatal to the next invading fleet that sailed from that shore. The fleet was dispersed in all directions, to Holland and to Denmark, but the greater part were driven among the sandbanks of the Suffolk coast. So great a multitude of corpses were washed on shore here that the air was infected by them; they were the bodies not only of men, but of women and children; and it was believed, not without grounds, that the king had granted the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk to Hugh de Boves, to settle them with Flemings, and extirpate the native English. The few who escaped the sea were made slaves of by the English, into whose hands they fell.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Wend.    <sup>5</sup> Miles strenuus sed superbus et iniquus. W.

<sup>6</sup> Cogg.

The lapse of centuries has altered the form, but not the character of this coast. On a bank, in sight of the ancient town of Dunwich, once the capital of a Saxon kingdom, and seat of a bishop's see,<sup>7</sup> the ships of the two captains struck. Hugh de Boves perished at once with all his crew and treasure. Two boats put off from the shore to the other vessel. As they neared the sandbank the knights drew their swords to keep back the inferior part of the crew from crowding into the boats. This selfish movement cost them their lives. At sight of the drawn swords the boatmen stopped. A priest and a boy, who could swim, threw themselves into the water and made for the boats. The next tide swept away all the rest.<sup>8</sup>

In October, the king heard that D'Aubigny had been left by the barons in Rochester Castle with not more than a hundred knights. He immediately set off to surprise him. The Fleming, Robert de Bethune, expressed his wonder that the king should make the attempt with so weak a force. "I know them too well," was John's answer, "to esteem or to fear them. And to say the truth, I am more grieved that strangers should see what cowards my English are, than at all the mischief they are doing myself."<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> John had, not long before, granted Dunwich a charter of wreck, which on this occasion must have been fearfully productive.

<sup>8</sup> Chron. Norm.

<sup>9</sup> This brings to mind what is told of James II. "When king James was at Dublin, 1689, the French ambassador came transported to tell him the news, that his master's fleet had defeated the English in Bantry Bay; instead of being pleased he let fall the air of his countenance, and coldly answered, 'It is then the first time!'" Higsons, note on Burnet.

The barons had taken an oath to relieve D'Aubigny if he should be attacked. Seven hundred men accordingly left London on the road for Rochester, but hearing that the king's army was increasing every day, they turned back to their comfortable quarters in London. Here they passed their time in drinking the best of wines, and playing dice, leaving Rochester to its fate.

If the king's contempt was justified by the general conduct of the barons, the defence of Rochester castle was an exception. "So strenuous and persevering a siege, and so stout a defence, there was never the like in our days."<sup>1</sup> The castle itself was one of the strongest in the kingdom. Since Odo had held it against the whole force of England, Normans and Saxons united, under William Rufus, it had been undergoing constant fortification under its new holders, the archbishops of Canterbury. "Whence it was much in the eye of such as were the authors of troubles following within the realm, so that from time to time it had a part in almost every tragedy."<sup>2</sup> Five mangonels, day and night, hurled a never-ceasing shower of stones against the wall. But the solidity of bishop Gundulph's Norman masonry was proof against every species of attack but mining. In this way great part of the outer wall had been thrown down, but the knights still maintained themselves in an inner tower. But when they had eaten everything that could be eaten, even to the war-horses, and the last morsel of all was gone, "a strait which was hard for them that had been brought up in delicacy,"<sup>3</sup> they thought it pitiful to perish of hunger, when they could not be beaten at arms. On S. Andrew's day they went out of the tower, and presented themselves before the king. Of

<sup>1</sup> Cont. Hov.<sup>2</sup> Lambarde.<sup>3</sup> Cont. Hov.

the hundred knights, one only had been killed by the javelin of an engine. In those days, the more obstinate the defence the better the terms granted to the defenders. But John defied the rules of chivalry, as well as those of religion. He ordered them all to be hung. But the experienced eye of the soldier of fortune saw the danger to himself of such a precedent. "None of the foreign knights," said Savary de Mauleon, "will serve under you on such conditions. The enemy will retaliate on us, not on you." Harsh captivity and heavy ransom was all the revenge John durst indulge in towards the knights. But for those who formed the majority of the garrison, the servants and crossbow-men, who had shared the privations of the siege, and whose fidelity and valour had been proved alike with theirs, neither the laws of honourable warfare, nor the self-interest of the foreign captains, were concerned in their fate. John had before cut off a hand and a foot from a number whom the besieged had turned out as useless mouths. These could not look for more clemency. Unlike many tyrants, John did not make up for his hatred of the great by any sympathy with the humble. To the surprise of everyone, however, he spared the lives of all, singling out for his vengeance one crossbow-man only, who had been brought up in the king's service from a boy. The rest were distributed as slaves among the foreign soldiers, till any of their former masters should think it worth his while to pay a ransom for any of them.

This success encouraged the king's party as much as it disheartened that of the barons. Their remissness was justly censured. They had lain in London inactive throughout the siege. It is hard to say which they feared most—the foreign knights, or the fierce resolution of the king's character. But the real secret of their

apathy was the consciousness that they had gone too far ; that the right was no longer on their side. This was a feeling gradually gaining ground, both in and out of the kingdom ; and as soon as the Church should publish and warrant it, their partisans would fast fall off.

And in the course of the siege this declaration came. On the representation of the archbishop of Dublin, and the bishop of London, whom the king had sent to Rome, a bull was sent to England excommunicating "all the disturbers of the king and realm of England." At the time this bull arrived, Langton was on the point of setting out for the General council,<sup>4</sup> which was now sitting at Rome. The bishop of Winchester, and Pandulph the deacon, two of the three to whom the bull was addressed, hastened to him after he was already on board ship, and begged his order to his suffragans throughout the province of Canterbury for the publication of the bull. Their promptitude was a sad trial for the archbishop. If he could have got to Rome without acknowledgment of the bull, he thought his representations of John's real designs would have induced Innocent to alter his present policy. This was to admit the king's repentance and submission as real. Whether it was so or no, as a judge, a pope must accept outward, overt acts, as done *bonâ fide*, whatever presumption of hypocrisy the penitent's previous character may raise. Such acts on John's part had been, the restitution, the act of humiliation, and the taking the cross.

But there seems no reason to think his repentance other than sincere ; as much so at least as the first repentance of an habitually wicked mind can be. Humanly

<sup>4</sup> Fourth Lateran, sat from All-Saints' to S. Andrew's Day, the whole month of November.

speaking, where there has been a Christian education, there is always hope that the conscience may awaken. The most hopeless case is the decent and respectable sinner in protestant countries, where training of the conscience in youth is neglected. There is no part of such an one's nature to which Divine warnings can appeal. There is more hope of a profligate tyrant of the thirteenth century than of such : and again, none can set limits to God's power of touching the heart from within. Ahab repented, and was forgiven. Henry II. had done so severe a penance, and with so true a compunction, for S. Thomas's murder, that "all who beheld, wept thereat."<sup>5</sup> And John's past conduct, and his dying behaviour, seem to justify the contemporary chronicler in assigning as one of the motives of his yielding that "he had so greatly offended God and the holy Church, that he began altogether to despair of the salvation of his soul."<sup>6</sup>

But Langton wanted more than that the king should be reconciled to the Church. He sought the formal security of the Charter. John might have been sincere at first ; but his continuing so, with an army at his command, was unlikely. The archbishop could not bring himself to publish the excommunication against the confederate barons. In neglecting the bull, he was certainly wrong. It was ecclesiastical law, and he was bound to publish it as such. If it was founded on partial representations, he might appeal against it afterwards. However, he did not refuse to publish it, but begged the two commissioners that its publication might be postponed till he had an interview with the

<sup>5</sup> Ut omnes videntes ad lacrymas cogeret. Rob. de Monte.

<sup>6</sup> De animæ suæ salute penitus desperabat. Wend.



pontiff. This they could not do, and at once proceeded to put one of its clauses into operation against himself, as refusing his obedience; they pronounced him suspended from his sacerdotal, as well as episcopal functions. He made no resistance as he might have done, under the usual pretext of an appeal, but proceeded on his journey, observing the suspension with all humility. The bull was immediately published in England, being read in all the churches on Sundays and festivals. But as it only excommunicated the disturbers of the realm in general, and did not name any of the barons, they paid no regard to it, pretending it did not apply to them.

On Langton's appearance at Rome, the abbot of Beaulieu was there as his accuser. He represented the archbishop's connivance at the attempt of the barons to dethrone the king, and his neglect of the bull of excommunication. Langton made no defence, but humbly petitioned to be absolved from the suspension. "Not so, brother; you will not so easily get absolution for all the harm you have done, not to the king of England only, but to the Roman Church. We will take full counsel with our brethren here, what your punishment must be," was Innocent's answer. His suspension was accordingly confirmed; Innocent being grieved at the part he had taken, the rather that he had himself procured his promotion.<sup>7</sup> It was removed before Easter; the archbishop entering into the usual caution, to abide by the decision of the pope in his cause, with the additional proviso that he should not return to England till peace was settled between the king and the barons.

He sat in the council, notwithstanding the suspension, but his learning and experience were lost to it, as he took no part in its deliberations, seeing that he had lost

<sup>7</sup> Cont. Hov.

“the grace of his lord the pope.”<sup>8</sup> But as his conduct had been upright through circumstances of peculiar difficulty, his high character was not sullied; “the Lord who knew that his conscience was unwounded, preserving his fame unblemished.”<sup>9</sup>

The determination of Innocent to support the king was further shewn in two elections which took place about this time. The see of York had lain vacant since the death of Geoffry, John’s half-brother, during the Interdict. Notwithstanding the charter of free election, the king accompanied his licence to elect with a recommendation of Walter de Gray, bishop of Worcester, his chancellor, and brother of the late bishop of Norwich. Like all the clerics of the court, he was destitute of any ecclesiastical learning: whatever his ability in the Chancery, his clerkship was contemptible. On this ground he was rejected by the chapter, who elected Simon Langton, brother of Stephen. They might not know at the time that he had previously been prohibited by Innocent, in a personal interview at Rome, from ever aspiring to that see. They thought that his reputation for theological science would be his recommendation to the learned pontiff. Here was a singular parallel! The other archiepiscopal see was now disputed between two claimants, the brothers of those two between whom the dispute respecting Canterbury had lain. On each side the same claims—for Langton, his character and theological attainments, and the choice of the chapter; De Gray was the king’s servant and friend. The decision, however, was different.

<sup>8</sup> Quoniam intellexit gratiam Dom. Papæ sibi subtractam, pauca verba de cætero in concilio fecit. Cont. Hov.

<sup>9</sup> Chron. Dunst.

The king appealed to Rome on behalf of his minister. It was highly inexpedient for his realm that the brother of "his public enemy" should be made archbishop of York. The papal bull takes no notice of the king's reasoning, but annuls the election on the ground of the previous prohibition. The chapter were summoned to Rome to make the election in the pope's presence, where they chose the king's nominee, De Gray, justifying their submission by his chastity, which it should seem was his single virtue.<sup>1</sup>

Necessity may have obliged Innocent to support the king in everything at this critical moment. But it were to be wished that the victory that had just been won, had not been thus abandoned in practice, and that the race of courtly bishops should not have been thus perpetuated. Such prelates often compensate for their worldly character by the possession of worldly virtues. This was not the case with De Gray. As archbishop, he oppressed his tenants, and was unmerciful to the poor. During a great scarcity he hoarded his corn in his barns. He had a manor at Ripon, where he had laid up the produce of five years. It was feared that the grain might be injured by keeping; so he ordered it to be given out to his farmers for seed, who were to repay it in kind after the harvest. When the ricks came to be opened out for the purpose, they were found full of vermin of all sorts, and emitted so horrible a stench, that none could go near to uncover them, and they were obliged to be burnt as they stood. All who saw it judged it a miraculous punishment for his sin.

All the king's supporters, however, were not equally

<sup>1</sup> Propter carnis munditiam ut qui ab utero matris virgo permanserat. Wend.

fortunate. The false teacher, Alexander, was accused of having propagated heretical and mischievous doctrines. The king wrote himself to the pope in his behalf. "Be it known to your Holiness that the lies which were put upon Master Alexander, of S. Alban's, our clerk, were circulated only by the breath of envy ; wherefore it may be aptly said, without the cloak of falsity, that, as much was inflicted upon Isaiah by the Jewish people, upon Moses for the Ethiopian women, and Paul for the seven churches, so was no less inflicted upon Master Alexander by the slanderous rabble. Wherefore we earnestly supplicate, &c."<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding these most appropriate parallels from Scripture, sentence of condemnation was passed upon him ; he was deprived of the benefices John had heaped upon him during the Interdict, and reduced at last to such distress, that he, who had feasted at the king's table, now begged his bread from door to door in S. Albans.

<sup>2</sup> Rot. Claus., Ap. 23, 1215.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE archbishop being thus removed from the scene of action, the civil war, which now raged at home, is no longer connected with his personal history: but, as it was the consequence of the previous events, our subject cannot be closed without some notice of it.

The success at Rochester, and the apathy of the barons, had changed the face of affairs. The king no longer confined himself to his castles in the south, but marched into the centre of the kingdom to S. Albans. The cloister of that abbey the "secure retreat" of the religious and the student,<sup>3</sup> was now the council-hall where John and the foreign captains formed the plan of a complete and signal vengeance on the barons. This was nothing less than to put their lands—that is, the whole country northwards from that place, the royal manors excepted—under military execution. The force that lay at London was chiefly composed of the Northern barons and their retainers, so that the baronial party was denoted at the time by the name of "the Northerners."<sup>4</sup>

John divided his troops into two bodies. The Flemish mercenaries and his English adherents he took with him and marched northwards; the rest of the

<sup>3</sup> *Martyris Albani sit tibi prima claustrum quies.  
Hic locus ætatis nostræ primordia novit  
Annos felices, lætitiæque dies.*

*Alexander Neckham.*

<sup>4</sup> *Norenses, Dunst.; le Norois, Hist. Norm.*

foreign troops he directed towards the eastern counties. And now began a scene the like of which had not been in England since William the First's devastation of Northumbria. The foreign soldiery were let loose on the country with more than licence,—with express orders to commit all the havoc and excess in their power. John's route from S. Albans to Durham was marked by a broad track of ruins. The villages, barns, houses, ricks, everything that would take fire, down to the hedges, were burnt. The parks and inclosures were thrown down, the deer and the herds slaughtered, the orchards cut down, the towns put to heavy contributions. "These limbs of Satan covered like locusts the whole face of the land, for to this end they had been gathered together from distant parts to destroy from off the face of the earth all living things, man and beast. Running hither and thither, with swords and knives bare, they entered houses, churchyards, churches, and robbed all, sparing neither sex nor age. Priests standing at the very altar, holding in their hands the sign of the Lord's cross, wearing the sacred vestments, were carried off, tortured, spoiled, wounded. Knights and others, of whatsoever condition, to draw money from them, they hung up by the loins, feet, legs, thumbs, or arms, and so squirted salt and vinegar into their eyes, not discerning that they had been made in the likeness of God, and distinguished by the name of Christ. Others again on trivets and grid-irons they set on red-hot coals, and then bathing their scorched limbs in cold water, made them thus give up the ghost."<sup>5</sup>

The festival of Christmas gave the bare respite of a single day ; the next morning the king was up before

<sup>5</sup> Wend. iii. p. 351.

light to commence his barbarous sport. The sufferings of the poor peasants, whose homes were burnt and corn destroyed, were aggravated by the season of the year. They crowded into churches and churchyards, an asylum generally, but not always, respected. On Christmas-day, at the hour of tierce, while the solemn mass was being celebrated in the abbey of Tyltey, in Essex, Savary de Mauleon's Poitevins burst into the church, broke open all the chests, and, overturning in their search the furniture of the altar, carried off a considerable sum which had been placed in deposit by the petty merchants or shopkeepers. Coggeshalle Abbey shared the same fate on the Circumcision; afterwards Crowland, and even S. Edmund's did not escape. Before the martyrdom of S. Thomas, S. Edmund the king had been the most highly venerated Saint in England, as he still continued to be in the eastern part of the kingdom. His festival was included among holidays of precept by Langton in the synod of Oxford (1222), but omitted afterwards by Islip, in 1362. Miraculous virtue was more active at his tomb than anywhere else. It was believed too, that like S. Martin in Gaul, in the sixth and seventh centuries, the Saint was not only beneficent to heal, but powerful to punish. When all the shrines in England were being stripped to furnish king Richard's ransom, the king's justices demanded that this excrustation should be applied to S. Edmund's shrine among the rest. The abbot Sampson resisted. "Know of a truth that this shall never be done with my consent. But I will throw open the doors of the church, and whoso will, may enter; let him who dares, lay hand on the shrine." Then each of the justices answered for himself with an oath, "I will not meddle with this; S. Edmund punishes even those who are far off; how much more him who

shall seek to take away his coat?" Thus the shrine of S. Edmund remained untouched at that time, but<sup>6</sup> it was now rifled by these devastators. The isle of Ely, which had so long sheltered the last of the Saxon patriots, had been now again the refuge of all the neighbourhood round. It was, however, entered on two opposite sides, and all it contained fell a prey to the invaders, excepting the persons of some of the great men who escaped on horseback over the ice to London.

But the end was drawing near. We shall not relate in detail the events of the civil war that ensued. How the barons invited over the dauphin, who, in right of his wife, Blanche of Castille, a grand-daughter of Henry II., set up the shadow of a claim to the throne of England, which he alleged had been forfeited by John, agreeably to the sentence which had been passed upon him in the court of his suzerain, the king of France, for the murder of his nephew Arthur. How the pope continued to support what was truly and in fact, and by a possession of sixteen years, the legitimate right of John; and how he first excommunicated the barons of England by name, and afterwards was proceeding to pass the same sentence on Philip, when his death averted the quarrel which must thus have been renewed between himself and the king of France. Innocent died on the 16th of July, 1216; and the other party in the memorable struggle of which we have given an outline, soon followed. In October of the same year, John was suddenly summoned to give an account before the Great Judge of all of the government of his kingdom.

For ten months the country had been unceasingly devastated by this unrelenting scourge, and there seemed

<sup>6</sup> Joc. de Braheland, p. 71.



no prospect of a termination. For partial success inclined first to one and then to the other, but either party was as far as ever from complete superiority. Round and round the country, with his habitual rapidity, moved the king. Just as he had ever done in peace, he continued to do now in time of war; except that his sport was now to burn and destroy, instead of shooting the deer on his manors. From Winchester to Wales; from Wales back again to Lincoln. On the 12th of October he was marching northward from Wisbeach, and had to cross the estuary of the Welland from Cross Keys to Foss-Dyke. Himself and his army got over in safety, but the whole train that usually attended his movements, carts, carriages, and sumpter-horses, laden with the furniture and relics of the royal chapel, the treasure, including the crown and regalia, all the jewels and plate by which he set so much store, together with those in charge of them, were swept away by the tide, and the quicksands of the Wash.

He reached the abbey of Swinestead that night. In a sullen and impotent rage at his calamity, he ate, as usual, voraciously of the food that was brought him, which happened to be peaches and new beer. The irritation of his mind, aggravated by this excess, threw him into a fever attended by dysentery. Restless to the last he moved on, carried in a horse-litter when he could no longer sit on horseback, as far as the castle of Newark. The abbot of Croxton, at once his chaplain and his physician, heard his confession, and gave him the holy Eucharist. He lingered till the 18th. Midnight, the hour of his death, was marked by an alarming tempest. No sooner was the breath out of his body than it was deserted by his attendants, who carried off all they could lay their hands on, scarcely leaving it a decent covering.

He was sincerely regretted, however, by his mercenaries, who, assembling from all parts, escorted his body to Worcester, where he was buried by his own desire between the shrines of S. Oswald and S. Wulstan, a monk's hood in place of a crown around his head as a preservative against evil spirits. He who had lived "a man of ill conditions"<sup>7</sup> desired a burial among the Saints.

We do not propose to draw John's character. The foregoing narrative may speak for itself. Not one of our kings has left a more distinct impression of his personal character. The government and political institutions of the Conqueror have perhaps left the deepest traces in our history, but the temper and manners of John; the former as the sovereign, the latter as the man—the Cyrus and CambySES respectively of English story. No one has ever spoken well of him—no one favourable or redeeming trait has been handed down respecting him. From Matt. Paris's

"Sordida fœdatur, fœdante Johanne, gehenna,"

downwards, all who have written of his reign have been unanimous in execrating this "*Monstrum a vitiis nulla virtute redemptum.*" Nothing can be said in mitigation of this sentence. It can only be pleaded that, instead of being confined to this single prince, the same character would hold good of more than one of our early kings besides. But Rufus, Henry II., Richard I., were powerful and successful; John was unfortunate, and the odium of failure has drawn the world's reprobation on his vice. The single attempt at apology that has fallen within our notice, proceeds from the chronicler of that age of infatuated servility which exulted in the good and

<sup>7</sup> Homo malarum conditionum. Johan. Ross.

glorious reign of Elizabeth, and had received its religion from Henry VIII.

\* “ Verilie, whosoever shall consider the course of the historie written of this prince, he shall find that he hath beene little beholden to the writers of that time in which he lived....To say what I thinke, he was not so void of devotion towards the Church as divers of his enemies have reported, who of mere malice conceale all his vertues, and hide none of his vices, but are plenti-full enough in setting forth the same to the uttermost, and interpret all his doings and sayings to the worst, as may appeare to those that advisedlie read the works of them that write the order of his life, which may seeme rather an invective than a true historie. Neverthelesse, sith we cannot come by the truth of things through the malice of the writers, we must content ourselves with this unfriendlie description of his time. Certainlie, it should seem the man had a princelie heart in him, and wanted nothing but faithful subjects to have assisted him in revenging such wrongs as were done and offered by the French king and others.

“ Moreover, the pride and pretended authoritie of the cleargie he could not well abide, when they went about to wrest out of his hands the prerogative of his princelie will and government. True it is that to maintaine his warres, which he was forced to take in hand, as well in France as elsewhere, he was constrained to make all the shift he could devise to recover monie; and because he pinched their purses, they conceived no small hatred against him, which when he perceived, and wanted peradventure discretion to pass it over, he discovered now and then in his rage his immoderate displeasure; as one not able to bridle his affections, a thing very hard in a stout stomach, and thereby missed now and then

to compasse that which otherwise he might verie well have brought to passe."<sup>8</sup>

Our history naturally ends with the lives of the pope and the king, whose conflict has been its subject. The archbishop survived them twelve years. Two actions, by which he illustrated this period of peace and repose, may be briefly mentioned.

1. The translation of S. Thomas à Becket. It was most fitting that this should be performed by a successor, who not only sat in his chair, but trod in his steps and had suffered in the cause for which the Saint was martyred. For fifty years, the channel through which God's mercy had been chiefly shewn to the people of England, had been the tomb of S. Thomas, of Canterbury. He had become what S. Edmund had been a century before, the centre of that veneration which was paid to the Saints. This was owing to the number of wonderful cures wrought at his tomb. In his life proscribed, despised, lightly treated even by his friends, dying a worse death than a traitor and a felon, he had been privately and hastily buried in an obscure vault in the crypt, to save his body from insult. Here he might soon have been forgotten, or, if remembered, it might have been as one among the vast ocean of historical characters, one who had done and suffered no more than many others had done and suffered. The sentence of Heaven only could make known that his life had been offered to God, and that the sacrifice was acceptable in His sight. And this sentence was given in that way that is least of all liable to mistake, by the visible and tangible evidence of miracles. It is to the humble monk and the helpless poor, the obscure and the oppressed, but,

<sup>8</sup> Hollinshed.

withal, faithful and obedient, God dispenses help and healing by the medium of the remains of the dead. It is not the canonization and the translation that give notoriety to the merits of the dead ; they are but the seal and sanction of the Church to the sentence which the common voice of the faithful has already proclaimed. But miracles have a tendency to produce miracles. For as a miracle is a co-operation of God's power with man's faith, the more the prayers of the believing are attracted to any particular relic, the more is its hidden virtue developed ; so continually fresh prodigies were performed at Canterbury. The public voice of the Church had obliged the pope (Alexander III.) to canonize him, and now the same voice called on the archbishop to provide a more honourable place for his wonder-working bones than the damp and dark undercrypt. His own piety prompted him to the performance of this with all the magnificence in his power. Notice was publicly given of the intention two years beforehand. Honorius III., in an official bull, exhorted "the English of every condition, observing mutual concord in the bond of charity, to purify their consciences from all perversities, and study so to exercise themselves in good works, that when the day of the solemnity should arrive, they might be fit to shew due honour to their holy martyr." The day fixed on was Tuesday the 7th of July—Tuesday being the day of the week on which he suffered. It was remarked at the time as a providential coincidence,<sup>9</sup> that it was the anniversary of the day on which the corpse of his murderer, Henry II., forsaken by his attendants, had been carried by strangers to Fontevraud. At the preceding Pentecost, Langton had presided at the coronation of

<sup>9</sup> Deo procurante. Stephan. Lang. Serm.

an earthly king, Henry ; he now administered at the exaltation of one who, as a prince, had power with God. Never before in England had such a multitude been gathered into one spot ; from every shire's end of England, from every corner of Christendom, of all sexes and of all ranks, abbots, priors, barons and clergy. There were twenty-four bishops present. The archbishop of Rheims said mass. And the holy remains were transferred from the unadorned stone coffin to a sumptuous chapel at the back of the high altar. Erasmus, who made a pilgrimage here, more from curiosity than devotion, during Warham's episcopate, describes minutely its then situation. It could only be shewn by the prior in person. A case of wood, raised by a pulley, disclosed a chest or coffin of gold, which contained the holy treasure. All present immediately knelt down ; but the bones themselves were not exhibited. "Inestimable riches adorned it ; the meanest thing to be seen was gold. Rare gems and of the largest size glittered and gleamed around, some of them exceeding the size of a goose's egg. The prior, with a white wand, pointed out each jewel, adding its value and the name of the donor. The richest were the presents of princes.<sup>1</sup>" For the entertainment of this vast crowd of pilgrims, all the resources at the archbishop's command were put into action. His manors and houses in Canterbury and the neighbourhood were opened for their reception, wine flowed in every part of the city, free entertainment and forage were provided all the way from London. "And, though all he could do could not provide for anything like all who came, yet it shewed," says the chronicler,<sup>2</sup> "his generous will." Langton's princely hospitality,

<sup>1</sup> Peregrinatio Relig. ergo.

<sup>2</sup> Waverl.

indeed, was not only to his power, but beyond his power; for the revenues of the see did not recover this outlay under himself and three of his successors.

2. The other act of the archbishop which we shall mention is the synod at Osney, in 1222, at which he presided, and at which were enacted a number of canons for the better government of the English Church, most probably drawn up by him. As *Magna Charta* forms the first of the Statutes of the realm, so those constitutions are the earliest provincial canons which are still recognized as binding in our ecclesiastical courts; and thus form the foundation of that vast fabric of ecclesiastical law which, when every other religious institution was being recklessly destroyed or remodelled, was left, from the sheer impossibility of dealing with it; reminding us of some of those old feudal towers, the solidity and tenacity of whose construction is such, that the destroyer has suffered them to remain, because the expense of pulling them down would be greater than the value of the materials.

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## NOTE (a), p. 2.

There is a remarkable peculiarity about the authorities for the reign of John. The numerous and circumstantial chroniclers who furnish such abundant materials for preceding reigns: Hoveden, Diceto, Benedict, Gervase, Brompton, and Newburgh, all end with the twelfth century. On the other hand, the public records commence with this reign. From the Patent and Close Rolls, a table has been drawn which enables us to ascertain the place where John was on nearly every day throughout the eighteen years of his reign. A circumstance this, especially in the case of a prince who almost lived upon horseback, hardly ever sleeping at the same place two nights together, which brings home that distant period to us in as lively a way as if it were only a century old. Besides this Itinerary, these records furnish many curious particulars of which use has been made. The chief authority for the general history is the chronicle of S. Alban's Abbey, written during this period by a contemporary, Roger of Wendover. When no other authority is given, this is to be understood. Matthew Paris, in the reign of Henry III., interpolated the genuine chronicle with statements of his own, less trustworthy than those of the original. There are other contemporary annalists, but brief and compendious in



comparison of Wendover. Of these Ralph of Coggeshale, and a chronicle apparently made up by Mr. Petrie, from Walter of Coventry, and two others,<sup>3</sup> are the most valuable. For the civil war and the invasion of Louis, a chronicle, in Norman French,<sup>4</sup> lately published by M. Michel, is more full than any other known source. No use has yet been made of it by any English historian of this reign. It was apparently written by one of John's Flemish mercenaries; and is a kind of journal, in a rude colloquial style, of events that befel the army. Many of the monastic annals contain additional particulars; e.g. those of Waverley, Burton and Margam, but they bear traces of either being written much posterior to the events, or having imperfect information. In general, it may be laid down as a rule regarding these Latin chronicles, that those which are not contemporary to the events they relate, are very unsatisfactory authority. A striking instance of this is furnished by the story that John died of poison, which is first hinted at by a writer of the year 1298, in the single expression, '*veneno extinctus*;' but before the end of the next century has expanded into a long and circumstantial narrative, and is delivered by Foxe as an undoubted truth, and illustrated by a cut. Lastly, may be mentioned the two collections of Innocent III. Letters, which contain the most part of the letters written by him to the king and the bishops on this affair.

<sup>3</sup> Cited as Continuator Hovedeni.

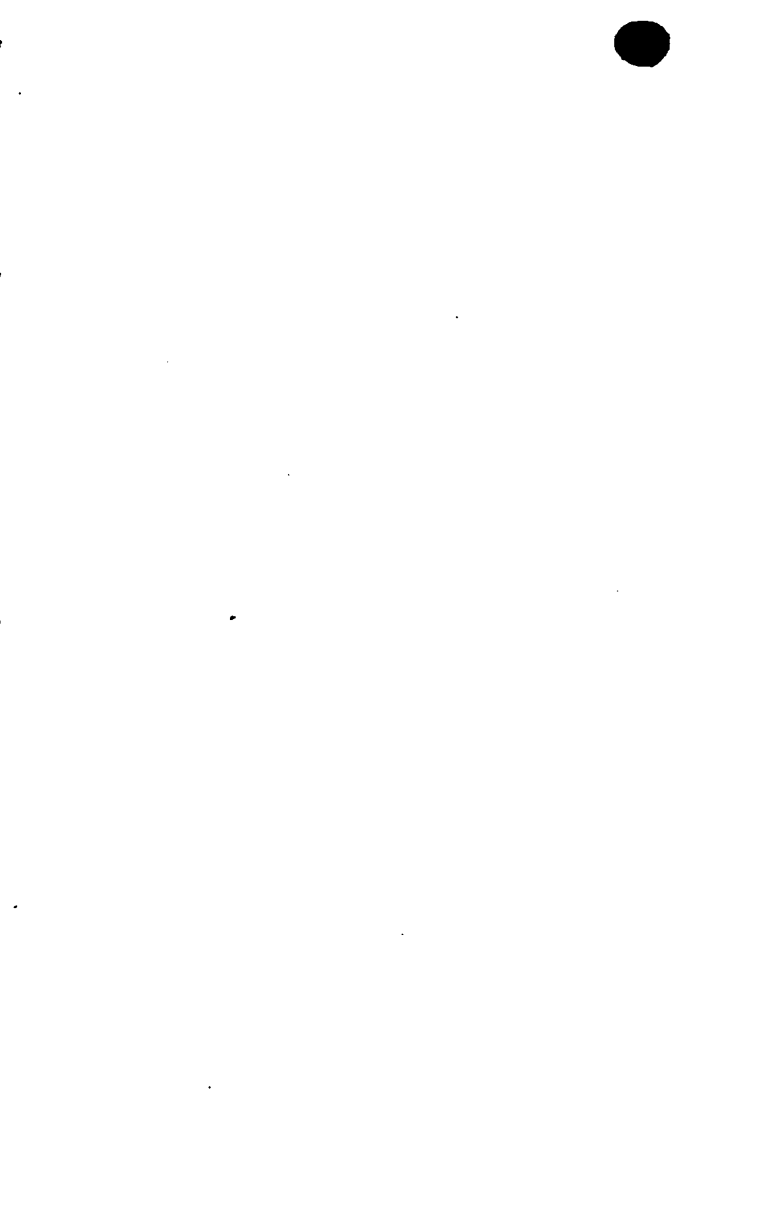
<sup>4</sup> Chron. Norm.

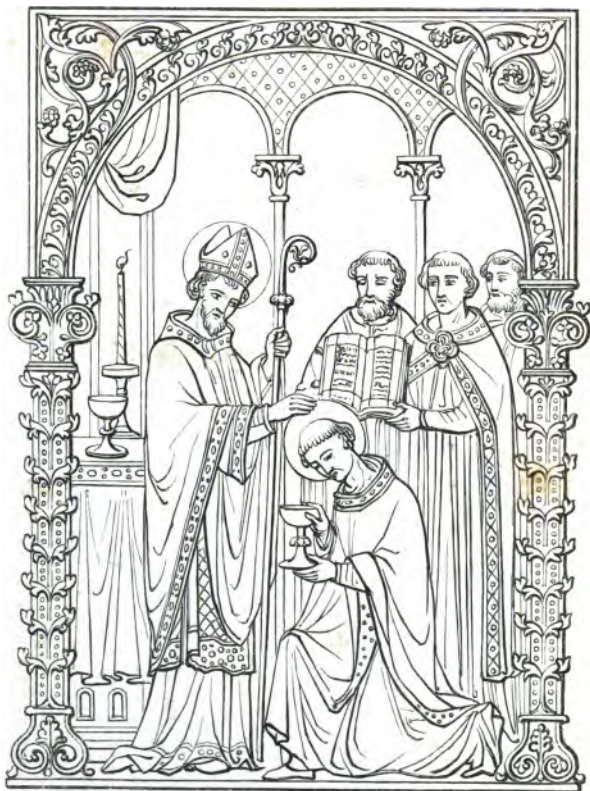
## NOTE (b), p. 3.

Bale, and a host of writers copying him, make Langton to have been Chancellor of the University of Paris. But at this period there was no such officer. There was the Chancellor of the Church of Paris, and the Chancellor of the Church of S. Genevieve, but no Chancellor of the University of Paris. The error probably originated in mistaking the expressions "scholis regebat," or "præsidebat," used by the older writers who mention Langton—i.e., Henry of Gand, and Trithemius, by which is only meant "taught in the schools." The accurate Leland is the only later writer who avoids this mistake.

THE END.

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S. GERMAN

LIVES  
OF  
THE ENGLISH SAINTS.

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**St. German,**  
BISHOP OF AUXERRE.

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MANSUETI HEREDITABUNT TERRAM, ET DELECTABUNTUR IN  
MULTITUDINE PACIS.

LONDON :  
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1844.



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## CHAPTER XVII.

*Twelve Years.*

A GREAT work accomplished, a great event brought to pass through him or before his eyes, a man's character is at once altered ; he is suddenly raised in the scale of being. The change is not merely outward, it is not a mere shifting of position ; for though all before was in preparation, and the materials were in readiness, yet the combining power of one action seems to bring out of them a new nature—a new life. Those elements which were either disjoined or connected without unity, now become one, and assume a shape and permanent consistency. Moreover as all true knowledge resides in the relation of ideas, and knowledge has a tendency to produce confidence, when circumstances throw a fresh light upon this relation, man seems to acquire a further insight into his own character and condition, and his confidence, whether in himself or in Him whose instrument he is, is proportionably increased. We have but to consider what the feelings are of a warrior who has just gained his first great battle—what he was yesterday, what to-day ; or again, the emotions and thoughts of one who has escaped from the grasp of death and been restored to health and powers of reflection ; or the ideas which unexpected preservation from the terrors of the sea excite in the breast of those who are safely landed ; and we shall understand something of that mysterious change which one action, one event can effect in man.

St. German's victory over the Pelagians is an instance of such a change. His original Biographer is

indeed silent on the subject. Near in time to the circumstances of his life, Constantius sees the Saint from beginning to end ; and in one sense he may be right. No one is chosen to be general who has not given proof of his skill. St. German was doubtless well suited to the great work he accomplished in Britain. Yet on attentive reflection we cannot help looking upon him as a higher being after than before. His previous austerities, prayers, acts of mercy, deeds of power and energy were exercises and tokens of the same character—but here is the sacrament, here God's seal and justification. This is strengthened by a further consideration.

As great actions are made the occasion of God's approval, so they are a kind of signal to men in general to determine their appreciation of an individual character. Whether it be from some vicious infirmity in the large body of mankind, or from some wise provision of Almighty God, so it is, that the greatest excellences may fail to attract that notice which they ought, unless some definite and producible object of men's ideas and language be brought out by new circumstances. It is surprising how general opinion changes by a new phasis of the same qualities and powers. What before was a timid and half-recognized regard becomes at once avowed and ardent admiration.

Something of this kind is perceptible in St. German's life. On the one hand he seems to be really a more exalted being after his mission to Britain ; on the other he is the object of an universal enthusiasm out of proportion, as it were, with the nature of the change. It is subsequently to that period, that we hear of multitudes thronging from all quarters to obtain a sight of him, to get his blessing, to try his miraculous gifts ; and that

the welfare of Gaul is supposed to be endangered if he be not enlisted in its service, political as well as ecclesiastical. What death accomplishes for other Saints, stamping their virtues and achievements with a sure seal, this was done for St. German, (it may be said without partiality) by his Apostolic ministry in our Island. Contrast with his the lives of other eminent Saints. St. Chrysostom or St. Jerome, for instance, were, if any, illustrious servants of Christ ; yet before their death we can hardly say that they obtained that acknowledged and unqualified reverence which partakes of the honour paid to Canonized Saints. In the case however of the first Apostles we think we discern from the very beginning those tokens of a veneration, ever after to belong to them. "The sick were brought forth into the streets, and laid on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them."<sup>1</sup> "From the body of Paul were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."<sup>2</sup> Let the reader judge by the history of St. German's life subsequent to his return from Britain, whether he did not obtain after the first twelve years of his ministry a considerable portion of that outward honour, which the immediate Apostles of Christ owned from the beginning at Pentecost. It is usually said that every one Saint is exalted above all others, according as he is made the object of particular attention, or has local and accidental claims upon our regard. But this can never serve as a test. A case given, it cannot antecedently be pronounced of inferior

<sup>1</sup> Acts v. 15.<sup>2</sup> Acts xix. 12.

merits on a principle so vague as this. After all, the facts which constitute the case must first be examined, and to these in the present instance the reader is referred.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### *The Towns of Gaul.*

THE return of St. German to Auxerre was in the year 430. About a year had elapsed since his departure. His absence had been much felt. For while he on one hand raised the Church to a condition of great honour in Gaul, on the other he was called upon to act the part of magistrate ; and his conduct showed that he knew how to defend the interests of his fellow-citizens.

Auxerre, as we have observed before, though implicated in the general devastations of the Goths, did not till a later period remain long in the possession of any barbarian people. The Burgundians, who occupied a large district of Gaul to the south-east, had stretched their boundaries to the neighbourhood of Auxerre, but the city itself and its dependent territories did not then, or indeed ever, belong to them, as some have supposed.<sup>1</sup> The Franks who at a subsequent period, about 482, extended their kingdom over this part of Gaul, were, at the time of St. German's return, shut up in a small district to the north of Gaul.<sup>2</sup> And the Goths had

<sup>1</sup> Vid. D'Anville. Descript. France. Thierry Lettres. Bouquet. tom. i. 805, ad notas Tillemont, xv. 838.

<sup>2</sup> Gibbon, tom. iv. 277-283.

passed on to the south-west, where they had established a large principality, which was every day increasing. But that long strip of land, which follows the course of the Saône and then the Rhone down to the sea, still belonged to the Romans, who also were masters of the whole of the northern provinces.

During German's absence an unusual tribute had been laid by these last authorities upon the inhabitants of Auxerre, the burden of which excited the most bitter complaints. This town however was but a single example of a general system of oppression which then prevailed, and was one of the prominent characteristics of the age. Among other various reasons for it, the Roman government had daily become more urgent in its demands for supplies ; and the provinces of Gaul as being in the centre of war, were the special victims of all kinds of exaction. Up to this time Aetius, the chief defence of the Empire since the death of Stilicho, had been at the head of the Roman armies in Gaul. He was opposing at once the Burgundians in one quarter, the Franks in another, the Goths in another, and the Insurgents<sup>1</sup> in a fourth. To enable him to maintain sufficient troops, the Government drained the land of men and money. In fact, as Salvian says, "the Roman Republic was either entirely extinct in Gaul, or in those parts where it seemed to be still breathing, the heavy fetters of tribute were fast suffocating its dying energies."<sup>2</sup>

What these impositions were, may best be conceived from the same author's language of grief. The burden of them fell on the poor and middle classes, while the powerful took occasion of them to augment their own wealth. "The Prefecture, which was the highest civil

<sup>1</sup> Bacaudæ.

<sup>2</sup> p. 75.

office of the province, was too often, he says, but an excuse for plunder ; the dignity of the imperial magistrates<sup>1</sup> a mere field for the pillage of towns."<sup>2</sup> The methods resorted to were of the following nature. First there was a general heavy task laid upon every city, "the effects of which however severe and cruel, would at least have been tolerable, if all had shared them equally ; but what made them the more invidious, the indigent had to bear all the imposts, the rich were exempt."<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore there were often laid on individual cities, besides the general assessment, extraordinary taxes.<sup>4</sup> "This was the way, he continues ; new messengers arrived, secretaries and bearers of letters sent from the chief officers of the crown. They were introduced to the nobles of the city, and with them decreed the ruin of the people ; new taxes were forthwith resolved and published, and the poor had to pay."<sup>5</sup> The nobles, who assisted the extortions of the governors, might pretend to submit to the public tribute, but they always left the discharge of it to the people. And not content with this, contrived to increase their own private exactions under colour of public demands ; the consequences of which seem to have been the most grievous calamity of the time.

To all the severe and even unnecessary measures which the administration enforced, the people might cheerfully have acceded, and accepted the emergencies of war as an excuse, though often unjust, if they had met with kindness and equity among their own rich citizens and nobles. Nothing can exceed the picture which has been left of the barbarity of the nobles to-

<sup>1</sup> Sublimium.<sup>2</sup> p. 72.<sup>3</sup> p. 110.<sup>4</sup> Adjectiones tributarias.<sup>5</sup> p. 110.

wards the poor. We might be at a loss among so many proofs to select any in preference, but the following fact, related by the same contemporary author, will serve at least to indicate the spirit of the times. Salvian is intending to illustrate the facility with which men forswore themselves and took Christ's name in vain. "A short time ago," he says, "at the earnest request of a certain poor man, I went to intercede with a powerful nobleman. I entreated him not to rob an indigent and wretched person of his small substance ; not to take away the poor pittance which supported his need. The nobleman, who had coveted his little property with a rabid desire, and was already devouring in expectation his spoils, turned his fierce eyes towards me, with frightful expression, as if he thought I wished to take away from him that which he was only desired not take away himself. 'He could by no means comply with my request,' he answered, and seemed to imply that some sacred order or deed bound him to refuse me. I asked the cause of his denial. 'A most urgent cause,' he replied. 'I have sworn, by the name of Christ, that I will take away this property ; and you see, he continued, that I can not, may not, refrain from what I have thus pledged myself to.' The crime which could claim religion for its excuse silenced me. What could I do when such a theory of justice and religion was propounded ? I therefore departed."<sup>1</sup>

The consequence of these multiplied miseries was a threefold political evil. The poor, and in general those who happened to be inferiors to the nobles, or the provincial senatorial class of men which then occupied an important station, were at last forced "to deliver them-

<sup>1</sup> p. 91.



selves up to the more powerful citizens ; they became the Dedititii of the rich, that is, neither more nor less than their slaves : their very property and right.”<sup>1</sup> The important class of the Curiales, or those Burghers who had enjoyed many privileges and offices within their towns, was now fast disappearing. Every where men were selling their patrimony and themselves, for a temporary support and defence. “ These poor sufferers, who might seem to be gaining a protection, first gave up almost their whole substance to their protectors ; whereby the fathers were indeed protected, but the sons lost their inheritance : the price of protection to the one was mendicity to the others.”<sup>2</sup> The immense accession of numbers which thus accrued to the afflicted class of the Coloni, or Tenants, and Slaves can hardly be calculated. “ When men have lost their houses and are expelled their estates, by unjust appropriation, or by extortion, they then betake themselves to the farms of the powerful ; they become in short the Coloni, the Tenants of the rich.”<sup>3</sup> Many who were thus degraded were persons who had previous wealth and respectability to boast of. “ No longer able to keep the mansion or the dignity of their birthright, they were obliged to submit to the abject yoke of a Tenant.”<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand many abandoned their own country, gave up the name and ties of Romans, which formerly were deemed an honour to Gaul, and went over to the barbarians, the Visigoths, the Burgundians, and the Franks. It was a sad sight to see “ many who were born of respectable families, and had received a liberal education, flee for safety to the enemy, to escape the death of a public persecution at home, and seek

<sup>1</sup> p. 113.    <sup>2</sup> p. 113.    <sup>3</sup> p. 114.    <sup>4</sup> p. 115.

among barbarians those humane feelings which were thought to belong only to the Roman world.”<sup>1</sup> Here of course they were captives ; but it is remarked that such captivity was preferable to liberty at home ; those titles of franchise which were so long the glory of the municipal city, were now but empty rights. “The Roman name was becoming vile, nay even abhorred.”<sup>2</sup>

Lastly, the oppression of the inferior classes in Gaul produced an extensive and alarming rebellion ; and a vast confederacy of Insurgents, who went by the name of *Bacaudæ*, gradually was formed within the Roman dominions. Their chief seat was in those maritime provinces, which border the English channel, and went by the generic name of *Armorica*. Here they seem to have settled into a kind of Republic, which gave constant exercise to the Roman Generals, who endeavoured to suppress it, and bring back the seceding countries to the empire. An occasion will present itself hereafter of considering more at length this *Armorican* confederacy, or *Bacaudæ*, as they furnished the last field for St. German’s untiring exertions. It is sufficient here to mark this fact which by contemporary authors was declared to be the express result of the oppression of the poor in the Roman provinces. “We call them rebels, says Salvian, and abandoned men ; yet we are they who have compelled them to be such. For what is the cause of their becoming *Bacaudæ*, unless it be our injustices, the iniquities of our magistrates, the proscription and pillage exercised upon them . . . the tributary extortion practised with regard to them ?”<sup>3</sup>

To relieve his people at Auxerre, who were now

<sup>1</sup> p. 107.

<sup>2</sup> p. 108.

<sup>3</sup> p. 108.

suffering from these evils, was the immediate purpose of German. When extraordinary taxes were laid upon a city too poor to answer the demand, there were such things as *remedies* in use at the time. These remedies,<sup>1</sup> as the expression was, were simply dispensations granted by the Prefect, the first magistrate ; and though such dispensations, in many cases, were perverted by the nobles to the grossest excesses of private extortion, yet if German could but provide one for his people, he might in a great measure secure it from abuses elsewhere prevalent. Bishops in the fifth century were the stay of the people—the only one ; and Bishops at that time were Saints and heroes. Careless, therefore, of fatigue, though he had undergone so much of late, he immediately prepared for another journey.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### *St. German at Arles.*

THE seat of government was then at Arles, as it has been remarked, and there the Prefect of all Gaul resided. It is necessary to be precise in all these particulars, since serious chronological mistakes, for want of distinctness, seem to have here been made by many writers. *Auxiliaris* was the name of the Prefect, as Constantius plainly says ; from which circumstance many have thought the date of this extraordinary taxing which German found on his return, was as late

<sup>1</sup> Remedia.

as 444, A. D., if not later, because there is a famous letter of Auxiliarius to St. Hilary,<sup>1</sup> of Arles, written in 444, wherein the former endeavours to reconcile Hilary with Pope Leo, and which he wrote, we learn, when he was Prefect ; and they have urged this as a reason for postponing German's visit to Britain. But the diligence of the Bollandists has shown that Auxiliarius was no longer Prefect of Gaul when he wrote this, but Prefect of Rome or Italy ; which assertion is supported by the learned Bouquet, Pagi, Baluzius, and Quesnel ;<sup>2</sup> and moreover, an inscription which is still to be seen at Narbonne, seems to prove that Marcellus, not Auxiliarius, was Prefect of Gaul between 441 and 445. So far, therefore, from anything in this circumstance invalidating the date we have assigned to German's return from Britain, (i. e. the year 430) if the fact be true that Auxiliarius had ceased to be Prefect of Gaul in 444, this is in itself a satisfactory reason for placing the mission of St. German to our island in 429.

German set off then to Arles, with a very small company, and with a scanty supply of provisions. Christ, says Constantius, was gold and silver to him. The great Roman road to Arles would pass through Autun, Châlons, Tornus, Mâcon, Belleville, Anse, Lyon, Vienne, St. Rambert, St. Vallier, Thain, Valence, Le Bégude, Ancoune, St. Pol Tricartin, Orange, Avignon, and St. Gabriel,<sup>3</sup> the whole of which was signalized by some token of his Apostolical gifts.

The day was a rainy one when he left Auxerre ; towards the evening, as he had passed the boundaries

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Laccary Hist. Gall. sub. Præf. 137.

<sup>2</sup> Historiens de la Gaule, t. i. p. 643. Quesnel. Diss. t. ii. p. 784. Biogr. Univ. Art. Hilaire.

<sup>3</sup> Itin. Anton. in Descrip. de Gaule, B. 40, Bodl. Libr.

of his diocese, he was overtaken by a traveller who had neither shoes nor coat. Grieved to see his nakedness, German suffered him to lodge under the same roof at night. But while he and his attendants were employed in their devotions, the stranger carried off by stealth the horse on which the Bishop rode. The next morning the theft was discovered. One of the clerical attendants offered his horse to German. They then proceeded on their way, not without the surprise of all in witnessing the unwonted serenity which appeared in his countenance. One of them asked the reason. "Let us wait a while," he said, "for we shall see that the action of that unfortunate man has been of little benefit to him ; he will soon be coming up out of breath." They then halted, and shortly after beheld the thief advancing on foot, and leading after him the horse he had taken. When he arrived, he fell down at German's feet and confessed his crime, adding, that during the whole night he had found himself unable to get away or move one step, until he had resolved to restore the animal. German answered ; "If yesterday I had given thee a cloak, there had been no need of stealing. Receive, therefore, this one as a supply for thy wants, and restore that which is my property." The stranger then departed with the garment, in addition to the pardon of his offence.

German wished not to make his journey public, but to reach the object of it with as little display as he could. But his character was now too well known, and his virtues like a city built on a hill could not escape the view of men. While on one hand he abstained from all the so called comforts of life, he avoided on the other the officious attention and concourse of strangers. There was not, however, a village or town in his way,

but all the inhabitants came out by multitudes to await his passage, and follow his steps. Men with their wives and children came flocking around him, and left him only when a fresh escort arrived to relieve them.

The first district he travelled through was that of Auxois, where there lived a Presbyter called Senator, conspicuous for his birth as well as his piety. German had been long acquainted with him, as well as his wife Nectariola, who, according to the tolerated custom of the time, continued in the same house in the capacity of sister.<sup>1</sup> He accordingly accepted the hospitality they offered him. There indeed was not much to offer; but one peculiar circumstance occurred. Nectariola, unseen, placed some straw in the bed which was prepared for him, and German unconsciously slept upon it during the intervals which he reserved from his nightly prayers and psalmody.<sup>2</sup> When day returned he departed; Nectariola then took up the straw in which he had lain, and concealed it. Some days after, one Agrestius, a person of considerable birth, who was married and had children, fell a victim to the influence of an Evil Spirit. His relations grieved that German was no longer present to relieve him. As it was, there appeared no remedy, till the wife of Senator, Nectariola, having brought forth the straw she had treasured up, enveloped the afflicted man with it. In this state he remained a whole night, calling the while upon the name of German. The next morning he was delivered of the Evil Spirit and never after visited by it.

<sup>1</sup> Conf. *L'Art de Vérifier les Dates*, tom. i. p. 152, ubi Canons of the Council of Tours, 567, A. D. Ibid. p. 157. Dupin *Eccl. Hist.* tom. ii. 3rd Canon of the Council of Nice. Bingham, B. II. Ch. xxii. p. 101 and 155.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. *Baillet Vie de Saints*, xxxi. Jul.

In the meantime, German was continuing his journey. Arrived at Mâcon, on the banks of the Saône, a river noted for its slow course, which gave it the Celtic name of Arar in antiquity,<sup>1</sup> he left the high-road and advanced by the water towards Lyons. Lyons was one of the principal towns of Gaul in the early ages of Christianity. The church established there we are told was of Greek institution, as its origin, rites and bishops indicated. Nearly two centuries before this time it had been the scene of one of the most dreadful persecutions, and illustrious both for the glory of its martyrs and the holiness of its bishops, among whom was St. Irenæus.<sup>2</sup> It is situated at the conflux of the Rhone and the Saône. Some have thought that St. Eucher was at this time Bishop of Lyons ; but evidence seems to be against the supposition. Constantius, who was a priest in that church, would scarcely have omitted this occasion of introducing him to the reader.<sup>3</sup> Senator, his predecessor, apparently governed the church when German arrived there. The traveller was received by a large concourse of people of all rank and age. Every one endeavoured to come near to him. Some demanded his blessing ; others were content with touching him ; and others again rejoiced if they could but get a sight of him. Here he performed many miraculous cures upon sick persons ; and preached to the multitude who thronged to hear him. Not being able, however, to stay as long as they wished, he hastened to proceed to Arles. But his sojourn at Lyons, short

<sup>1</sup> Sidon. Apoll. not. ad Lib. ii. p. 237, Recens. Edit. D'Anville says it was called the Sacconna from the time of Ammianus Marcellinus, yet after him Constantius calls it Arar, and so Sidon. Apoll.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Eusebius. <sup>3</sup> See Tillemont, tom. xv. Vie de St. Eucher.

as it was, left a deep and lasting impression upon the minds of the inhabitants, and was the original occasion of the biography of St. German, which Constantius the Presbyter of Lyons wrote at the request of his Bishop, St. Patiens. The letter in which he expressed his compliance with the desire of St. Patiens is still in existence.

“Constantius the sinner, sendeth greeting to his blessed and Apostolical Lord and ever revered Patron, Patiens. It is with reason that among the virtues obedience claims the highest rank. By it many attempt at least what they feel unequal to. And therefore they must be considered worthy of the praise due to devotedness, who, regardless of their own inability, submit to those that order. This being the case, since you desire, most revered Pontiff,<sup>1</sup> to have the wondrous gifts of a holy man set forth conspicuously, and to propose the example of his miracles as an instructive lesson to all ; and have frequently enjoined me to transmit, as well as I could, to the present and future generations, the Life of that great Saint, German the Bishop, too much obscured by silence ; I therefore accede to the work with boldness, though, at the same time, I feel conscious of presumption. Do you grant the pardon ; for I might perhaps allege that some guilt attaches to your own judgment ; you ought to have chosen a better workman for such high materials. However, we are both acting up to the principle of Love ; you think me capable when I am not, I obey readily your authoritative injunction. Pray, therefore, for me, that my labour may, through your intercession, obtain that favour which it lays no claim to on the score of desert. Farewell ! long days in Christ to thee, blessed

<sup>1</sup> Papa venerabilis.



prelate. · Ever remember me.” Thus early were Saints’ Lives composed for the edification of the Christian people.

There were two ways from Lyons to Arles, either by water down the Rhone, as the custom till very late has continued,<sup>1</sup> or by the great Roman road which had been constructed as far as Narbonne, and which was one of the four Viæ Agrippinæ ; and perhaps to this two-fold way of travelling, an allusion is made by Sidonius Apollinaris in the following verses.

“ Hinc agger sonat, hinc Arar resultat,  
Hinc sese pedes atque eques reflectit  
Stridentum et moderator essedorum,  
Curvorum hinc chorus helciariorum  
Responsantibus alleluia ripis  
Ad Christum levat amnicum celeusma.  
Sic, sic psallite, nauta vel viator ;  
Namque iste est locus omnibus petendus,  
Omnes quo via ducit ad salutem.”<sup>2</sup>

It is conjectured by those that live on the spot, that the former way would most naturally be taken by the traveller. German, however, soon reached the term of his journey. As in other places, he was received at Arles amid the congratulations of the whole city. St. Hilary had lately succeeded to St. Honoratus in the Bishopric, or rather Archbishopric, of Arles. This town was then the first in Gaul. “It is an acknowledged fact, said the Bishops of the province in a letter to St. Leo, among all the people of Gaul and also in the holy church of Rome, that the city of Arles was the first which received St. Trophimus, sent by the blessed

<sup>1</sup> Lettres de Madame de Sévigné.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Epis. x. Lib. ii. et Notes. Ed. 1836.

Apostle Peter (that is apparently one of his successors) and that the gift of the Faith was conveyed to the rest of Gaul through this channel...therefore it is by right and justice that Arles has always had the chief rank in this church."<sup>1</sup> It was not till some time after the period under consideration, that the church of Vienne claimed the precedency, owing to the dispute of St. Leo and St. Hilary.<sup>2</sup> At Arles, moreover, was fixed the residence of the Prefect of Gaul ; it had succeeded to Treves in political importance, and had been particularly favoured by Constantine the Great, who had given it the name of Constantia. Here also tyrants had fixed their abode and dealt out the honours of the Empire. The advantages of its situation are thus described in an imperial rescript :<sup>3</sup>

"The city of Arles is so conveniently situated, strangers resort to it in such great numbers, its commerce is so extensive, that whatever is of foreign growth or manufacture, is to be found there. The wealth of the opulent East, of perfumed Arabia, luxurious Syria, fertile Africa, beautiful Spain and hardy Gaul, abounds in this place to such a degree, that every thing magnificent to be seen in other parts of the world, seems here to be the very produce of the soil. The union of the Rhine and the Mediterranean brings together the territories which they respectively water ; and the whole earth seems to contribute its stores to the advantage of the town : by land and by sea and by river, carts, ships, barges, are continually carrying into its bosom the riches they have amassed."

<sup>1</sup> Epist. Leon. Ed. Quesnel, p. 539, Vol. I.

<sup>2</sup> Alford ad an. 440.

<sup>3</sup> See Bouquet. tom. i. 766. and notes. Guizot, Europe.

But the chief pride of this second Tyre was its great Bishops. Holiness seemed to be the heritage of that church. St. Hilary who was then presiding over it, was, says Constantius, a man endowed with every virtue, a burning torrent of divine eloquence, an indefatigable labourer in the duties of his office, who alone spread a lustre over the diocese he governed. The reception he gave to German corresponded with the character he held. Though a metropolitan Bishop, he was much the younger of the two, having lately left the monastery of Lerins at the age of twenty-nine.<sup>1</sup> On the present occasion, we are told, his demeanour towards the more aged Prelate who came to visit him was that of a son to his father, and his respect like that due to an Apostle. From this time perhaps may be dated the intimacy which arose between these two eminent Saints, although there is nothing to prevent it having had an earlier origin.<sup>2</sup>

However, Auxiliaris the Prefect did not allow his friend Hilary to outstrip him in attentions to their distinguished guest. Unlike many who had filled the same high office, Auxiliaris was a faithful servant of the Church and its ministers, as he well proved afterwards in his endeavours to reconcile St. Leo with St. Hilary. He had long been desirous to know German, of whom he had heard much ; and the tidings of his arrival were highly acceptable to him. Another cause contributed to this satisfaction ; his wife had been for some time afflicted with a severe ague, and he expected German could afford relief. Before, therefore, he had entered the city, he went out to meet him. His surprise was

<sup>1</sup> Biog. Uni. ad vocem Hil.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Tillem. xv. 64.

not small to find German superior to the fame he had acquired : the dignity of his countenance, his learning, his authoritative manner of speaking, filled the prefect with admiration. He offered presents, and pressed the acceptance of them. Then he acquainted him with the sickness of his wife, upon which German, without delay, accompanied him to his residence. Here he found the sufferer, and immediately healed her. The relater of this miracle is careful to attribute the departure of her fever and shiverings to the joint power of German and the faith of the lady.

Having explained the object of his journey, he easily obtained the desired *remedium*, or exemption from tribute, for the people of Auxerre. He then hastened to carry back the joyful intelligence. His presence, however, was best able to infuse true pleasure into their hearts : when he was with them, they could be content under all circumstances.

German seems occasionally to have taken long journeys through different parts of Gaul for the purpose of reviving the religious spirit of his countrymen. At this time the interference of one bishop with another in the administration of their dioceses, might not under some circumstances be deemed obtrusive. The invasion of the Barbarians had spread so great an appearance of anarchy over the country, that the Bishops might in some sense consider themselves appointed collectively over the whole country, as one diocese, to restore discipline and kindle religion wherever they could. The zeal and holiness which distinguished the Bishops of the time, would also naturally encourage this understanding between them, and supersede any regular dispensation. It is perhaps on this principle that we find German, on one occasion, preaching within the diocese

of Auvergne, which had Bishops of its own, one of whom, several years after, was the illustrious Sidonius Apollinaris. Some have thought German came to Brioude, in Auvergne, on his way back from Arles to Auxerre, just after his interview with Auxiliaris;<sup>1</sup> but though it would not have taken him much out of his way to pass by Auvergne, yet his anxiety to reach his native country would scarcely have allowed him to take a circuitous course, especially over a hilly country; and Constantius seems to mark distinctly his return to Auxerre before his expedition to Auvergne, which he does not assign to any particular time.<sup>2</sup> When he came to Brioude, he found the inhabitants perplexed to know on what day they ought to celebrate the martyrdom of St. Julian. St. Julian is one of the most famous martyrs of the French church. He was a native of Vienne, and of noble birth, who suffered in the Diocletian persecution while Maximian governed the Western Empire.<sup>3</sup> At the advice of his friend Ferreolus the Tribune, he had retired to Brioude, in Auvergne, where the messengers of Crispinus the governor, found him and beheaded him. His body was interred at Brioude, and his head carried to Vienne. Gregory of Tours, who has written a special book about this martyr, tells us that many miracles were performed at his tomb; and the same Gregory considered himself under the immediate protection of St. Julian.<sup>4</sup> Sidonius Apollinaris also before him, remarks, in a letter to Mamertus, Bishop of Vienne, (an eminent Saint of the fifth century,<sup>5</sup> who instituted the Days of Rogation,)

<sup>1</sup> Baillet Vic des Saints, xxviii. August.

<sup>2</sup> Sidon. Apoll. Lib. II. Lett. ix. p. 168, and not. p. 221.

<sup>3</sup> Baillet, xxviii. Aug.

<sup>4</sup> De Gloria Martyr.

<sup>5</sup> Epis. i. lib. vi. p. 158.

the great honour in which St. Julian's remains were held ; and it was, in all probability, to the tomb of St. Julian that a pilgrimage was prepared by the relations of Sidonius. He describes it as full of danger, on account of the distressed state of the country from the outrages of the barbarians,<sup>1</sup> and at the same time commends their piety, for the design they had conceived.

When German perceived the cause of the people's grief, he said to them, "Let us pray to God. Perhaps he will reveal to us the day." When evening came, and all had retired, German, according to his custom, passed the whole night in prayer. On the following morning, he called together the chief persons of the town, and enquired whether they had had any revelation. When they answered in the negative, "Well then," said he, "know that the 28th of August is to be celebrated as St. Julian's Festival ; for I have learnt, by divine intimation, that on that day the blessed Martyr was murdered by the Pagans." When he had said this, the people present were filled with joy, and returned thanks to the Bishop for his services. It will be seen from this instance, how early importance was attached to the particular day of a Saint's death, in order to determine the Festival in his honour. No ordinary day would satisfy the people of Auvergne, and a general gloom had spread over them.

Few of the events of German's life, between his return from Britain to his second journey thither, which occupied a period of above sixteen years, have been transmitted to us by Constantius, and we have no means of supplying the deficiency from other sources, with the exception of one or two circumstances. St.

<sup>1</sup> Epist. vi. lib. iv. p. 337.

Hilary, we have seen, had contracted a great friendship with German,<sup>1</sup> which some carry up to an earlier period than the visit to Arles just related. It has been thought that Hilary was present at the Council which chose German and Lupus to go over to Britain, which is described as having been a very numerous one ; and certain it is, that could it be proved that it was held at Arles, according to Garnier's conjecture, Hilary must have been present. But without hazarding guesses, it appears that Hilary went often to see German, at Auxerre, although this town was out of his diocese, and the Bishop of Sens was German's metropolitan ; and he consulted him, we learn, upon all the questions relating to Church matters, that is, according to Honoratus of Marseilles, in his life of Hilary, "concerning the mode of government, and conduct of the different Bishops, whether their virtues or their faults."<sup>2</sup> It was this very vigilance which occasioned him trouble. The Archbishop of Arles assumed the superintendence of all the Churches of Gaul, which did not a little displease the See of Rome. About the year 444, Hilary paid a visit to German. As soon as his arrival was made known, divers persons of importance and many others, came to the two Bishops, and brought complaints of Chelidonius, Bishop of Besançon, saying that he had in former times married a widow, and when entrusted with an office in the civil government, had condemned some persons to death ;<sup>3</sup> both which things were accounted an obstacle to the elevation of any one to a

<sup>1</sup> Tillemont, t. xv. p. 64.

<sup>2</sup> p. 743. t. i. Quesnel, and Bolland. ad v. Maii.

<sup>3</sup> Tillemont, xv. 71.

Bishopric. Hilary and German then ordered the proofs to be produced. Many great Bishops assembled to be present at the discussion, among whom was St. Eucher of Lyons. It is believed that this Council was held at Besançon, at which, also, Hilary presided, not Eucher of Lyons, as being a junior Bishop. There the question was maturely weighed, and it was proved that Chelidonius had in fact married a widow ; consequently, he was called on to resign his episcopal office, and another was elected in his place. The decree of the Council was supported by the Patrician Aetius and the Prefect Marcellus. This sentence led to serious results. Chelidonius went to Rome and laid his cause at the feet of St. Leo, the Pope, who, notwithstanding Hilary's explanations, espoused the cause of the former, and re-established him in his See. Hilary, who had also gone to Rome, became the object of Leo's resentment, which, to all appearances, was anything but just, and did not even end with the death of the holy Bishop of Arles. It is supposed by Stillingfleet that German also was involved in the disgrace which Hilary then suffered with respect to the See of Rome. This, indeed, may be partly granted ; yet there is no reason to suppose him to have forfeited the estimation of Pope Leo in 444, except so far as related to this deposition of Chelidonius. But it would be absurd to infer with him, that this circumstance, which occurred in 444, must have made German obnoxious to Pope Celestine fifteen years before. At *that* time, Hilary was quite a young man, and just elected to Arles, and an intimacy with him was not in such abhorrence at Rome, as to injure German's character. On the other hand, there is no sufficient reason to suppose German, in his second voyage to Britain, which took place in 446, to have



acted against Leo's wishes ; it would be lending unjust motives to one who had the virtues of a Saint, and who must have been acquainted with the services which German had rendered to the Britons, services which few, perhaps none other, could confer.

The other circumstance not mentioned by Constantius, but by Hericus, the monk of Auxerre, (who, though a writer of the ninth century, may, as far as the general fact is concerned, be considered a sufficient authority,) relates to the meeting of German and St. Anian, the famous Bishop of Orleans. This was the St. Anian who not long after, by his prayers, saved the town of Orleans from the fury of Attila, who was besieging it, and to whom the sceptic Gibbon has not disdained to pay the tribute of admiration. Had Hericus not mentioned his interview with St. German, we might infer it from the mere probabilities. Their Sees were near, they were within the same civil jurisdiction, they were contemporaries, they were the same in life, doctrine, holiness. The traditions which record it are such as the following. There was a Church dedicated to St. German, in the time of Hericus, in one of the suburbs of Orleans. Here it was said St. Anian had met St. German. A peal of bells, which had suddenly been rung without any human assistance, had announced to him the arrival of his brother of Auxerre. He had collected a great number of his Clergy, and coming out to receive him, had advanced to this spot. When the time came for German to return, St. Anian accompanied him out of Orleans. They were met by a bier, on which was laid the corpse of an only son ; the mother was walking beside it. The two Saints demurred for a short time which should have the honour of restoring the child of this second widow of

Nain. St. German consented at last ; and brought again the dead son to life. The subject of this great miracle lived to an old age, says the repeater of the tradition ; and there is no doubt that a Church was dedicated to St. German, at the place where it occurred.

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## CHAPTER XX.

### *His Second Visit to Britain.*

GERMAN was now advanced in age ; he had governed the diocese of Auxerre for twenty-nine years, and had obtained the highest reputation over all Gaul for his miracles, holiness, and learning. His advice was sought by the whole Church on important matters, and distinguished men came to hear him discourse, and profit by his instructions. In the year 447, the intelligence was again brought to Gaul from Britain, of a revival of the Pelagian heresy in the latter country. There were few, it was said, who disturbed the peace of the nation, but the danger was every day increasing. German was again called to restore the doctrine which he before so signally had defended. As on the occasion of his previous mission he was requested by all to undertake the office of Apostle, so he was on this ; yet we are not able to determine whether any Council was assembled, or any peculiar authority, over and above the original commission which he had received, was required.<sup>1</sup> There is reason, however, to conjecture

<sup>1</sup> Const. had said, “*Preces omnium ad virum beatissimum deferuntur.*” Bede adds to omnium the word *sacerdotum*.

that a Synod was held at Trèves,<sup>1</sup> and that in consequence, Severus, the Bishop of that town, whose exertions in the north of Gaul for the promotion of religion had made him renowned, was elected to accompany German on his second voyage. Severus was the disciple, says Bede, of St. Lupus.<sup>2</sup>

During the interval which had elapsed from German's first journey to Britain to his second, the condition of this island had been anything but peaceful. Vortigern, to whom the reader has already been introduced, had by this time been elected king of the Britons. This event some assign to the year 438 ; but very little chronological certainty can here be expected. The character of Vortigern has come down to posterity with all the colours applied to unpopular tyrants. That his reign was compassed with more than ordinary difficulties cannot be denied. "When he was king," says Nennius,<sup>3</sup> "he was kept in suspense by continual apprehensions of danger from the Picts and Scots, from the remnant of the Romans ready to attack, and the exploits of Ambrosius ;" while the Saxons who surrounded the country with their piratical skiffs were ever waiting to profit by his vaccillations and imprudences. Still the most charitable interpretation cannot rescue him from very serious charges, namely, of gross immorality and irreligion. It is probably to this time that the pathetic declamations of the historian Gildas about the sins of the nation are to be ascribed.<sup>4</sup> The temporary return to religion and good manners

<sup>1</sup> Not in 449, according to Mansi Concilia, for German was then dead, and the Saxons had invaded Britain.

<sup>2</sup> Bed. lib. i. ch. 21.

<sup>3</sup> p. 24.

<sup>4</sup> Collier, p. 108.

occasioned by the distress which the invaders had produced, and by the visit of German and Lupus, had been followed by a different course of life so soon as the barbarians were defeated.<sup>1</sup> The orthodoxy of the nation indeed remained comparatively pure, but peace brought plenty, and plenty produced luxury and libertinism.<sup>2</sup> The principles of the people degenerated daily, and defied the coercion of all Ecclesiastical discipline. "When the aggressions of the enemy had ceased," says Bede after Gildas, "there was an abundance of provisions in the island such as had never been known ; but with them flowed in scandalous luxury ; and every vice soon followed in the train, especially cruelty and hatred of truth with love of falsehood ; insomuch, that if any one appeared somewhat more humane or sincere than the rest, the odium and sarcasms of all were directed against him, as if he were the subverter of Britain. And this was the condition not of the laity alone, but even of the flock of the Lord and of his Pastors. They cast away the light yoke of the Lord and gave themselves up to drunkenness, animosities, litigiousness, contention, envy and the like. However, while they were in this state a pestilence broke out, which carried off such numbers, that the living were not able to bury their dead. Still, neither the death of their kinsmen, nor the fear of their own, could recall those who survived from the death of sin. Therefore soon after, a more severe punishment fell

<sup>1</sup> Bede, ch. xiv. He does not connect the cessation of hostilities with the coming of German, but dates seem to imply as much, and it is hard to conceive the invaders settling down except after defeat. Compare also the extract from Giraldus Cambrensis below.

<sup>2</sup> Alford.

upon the wretched nation. To repel and keep off the continued irruption of the northern nations, a public council was held, and it was debated where assistance should be sought. All decreed together with their king Vortigern that the Saxons should be called over from the opposite shores to assist them. A measure which the Lord undoubtedly brought about to punish the sins of the Britons, as the event showed."

This invitation addressed to the Saxons is assigned to the year 449 by Bede. Not long before, in 447, while the nation was in the state just described, German came over with Severus of Treves. He had lost no time in setting off from Auxerre. His way again lay in the direction of Nanterre and Paris, as on his first journey. Here he was received by the congratulations of all. His blessing was demanded on every side. And while he was complying with the wishes of the inhabitants, he enquired earnestly after the virgin Genevieve. Genevieve was by this time grown up, for eighteen years had elapsed since German had passed through before. He was not altogether ignorant of what she had undergone since his departure.<sup>1</sup> The fact was that she had from the first led a life of exemplary holiness and mortification. At the age of fifteen, when confirmed in her vocation, she received the virgin's veil from the hands of Velicus, Bishop of Chartres.<sup>2</sup> At the death of her parents she removed from Nanterre to Paris, where she lived with her god-mother. Notwithstanding the sanctity of her life, she

<sup>1</sup> Biogr. Un.

<sup>2</sup> It is evident from this incidental passage that some time had elapsed between German's two voyages, contrary to the anachronism of some who assign them to years near each other.

could not escape calumny and persecution ; and her pious practices were looked upon as hypocritical arts. However German, regardless of the imputations which were cast upon her by her enemies, betook himself to the abode of the virgin Genevieve, and to the great surprise of all saluted her on entering in the most respectful manner, "as if he looked upon her as the temple in which the Divine presence was manifested."<sup>1</sup> The visit of so great a personage as German was alone a high commendation of her character ; but not content with this, he addressed a discourse to the assembled multitude, in which he declared the early events of her religious life,<sup>2</sup> and her high price in the sight of God ; and as a proof of her sincerity, showed to the people the ground on which she used to lie, moistened by her continual tears. For the present the outcries of her enemies were totally suppressed ; and German was able to proceed on his road. As it is not to the purpose of this narrative to describe the whole history of this great Saint, the reader is referred to those who have collected what is known of her.<sup>3</sup> It is sufficient here to say that her deeds were committed to writing eighteen years after her death, in 530. Her feast is on the 3rd of January.

German and Severus met with no obstacle this time in their passage across the channel. Swift as their progress was, yet the evil spirits managed to spread the fame of their arrival throughout the island, before, says

<sup>1</sup> Constantius.

<sup>2</sup> This also shows that time sufficient had elapsed for his first journey to have been forgotten in its details.

<sup>3</sup> Vid. Boll. ad iii. Jan. *Vita cum commentariis*, p. 137.—In modern languages, see her Life in Butler and Baillet, *Vie des Saints*, and Biogr. Uni.

Constantius, they were in sight. Among the first who came to meet German was Elaphius, one of the chief men of the country. He brought with him his son, who from childhood had been a cripple. The whole province, of which he apparently was sovereign, followed Elaphius. When the two Bishops had landed, the multitude thronged to get their blessing. German then learnt that the people had not yet departed from the faith in which he had previously established them ; and that the Pelagian leaven had infected a few only.

In the meantime, Elaphius threw himself down before German and Severus, and entreated them to have compassion upon his afflicted son. All united in expressing their commiseration for him. Then German having desired the young man to sit down, laid hold of his crooked legs, and passed his hand gently over the distorted parts. His touch produced an instantaneous cure ; the circulation returned to the withered joints, and the nervès resumed their strength. In the presence of all, the young man was restored to his father in perfect soundness. The people filled with amazement at the miracle, were confirmed in the Faith by which so great a deed had been performed. In some sense they resembled the Samaritans, who said unto the woman that conversed with our Lord at Jacob's well, " Now do we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ the Saviour of the world."<sup>1</sup>

The two Bishops then proceeded to take measures for the total extirpation of the Pelagian heresy. They preached everywhere with such efficacy, that the nation unanimously agreed to have the propagators of the

<sup>1</sup> St. John iv. 42.

error arrested and brought to the Bishops, to be carried away from the island into foreign parts. Some have thought they were sent to Rome, others that they were taken only to Gaul.<sup>1</sup> Constantius seems to affirm, that while care was taken to deliver Britain from their presence, hopes were entertained that they might elsewhere be brought round to orthodoxy.<sup>2</sup> The event fully showed the expediency of a measure, which might be looked upon now as an act of persecution ; for henceforth the Catholic faith remained entire in Britain up to the time when Constantius wrote, that is, about forty years after the journey of German.

With this last assertion Constantius concludes his narrative of German's second visit to Britain ; and as it is an important one, before the accounts of other authors are produced, it may be as well to notice some few observations to which it leads. A decided proof seems here to be given that the invasion of the Saxons and Angles did not extinguish the Christian religion in Britain to the degree which is generally supposed, and has been maintained by some writers. Constantius speaks of what existed in his own time, after the Saxons had been for nearly forty years settled in Britain. It would appear then, that whatever error there may be in that theory which rests the doctrines and discipline of the Church of England upon its original state under the Britons, in contradistinction to the arrangements introduced by St. Austin, yet there is a great appearance of truth in the reason which

<sup>1</sup> Hist. Ep. Antiss. c. vii. apud Boll. Tillemont tom. xv. p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> " Ut regio absolutione et *illi* emendatione fruerentur." Perhaps, however, the *illi* refers to the natives, as Constantius is not afraid of tautology.



is adduced to support it, viz. that the Christian religion was not utterly destroyed in Britain by the arrival of the Saxons. The analogy of other countries alone would lead to the belief that the Saxons, like other barbarians, would rather adopt the faith of the vanquished than impose their own ; and the language of Constantius is too strong to suppose the faith shut up in one corner of the island, Wales, according to the common notion. He says expressly, "*that in those parts* (from which the country where German landed could hardly be excluded, namely, the shores of Kent,) *the Faith continues untainted* (which could not be the case if a Pagan religion was there substituted for the Christian) *up to our times*."<sup>1</sup> Now if we consider that St. Austin came into England, according to Bede, in 596, and that Constantius wrote his Life of St. German about 483, it seems hardly possible that the Faith which remained entire in 483, should have been totally extinguished in 596, i. e. 113 years after ; especially as the violence of the Saxons is represented to have been displayed chiefly towards the beginning of their invasion, at least thirty years before Constantius wrote.<sup>2</sup> And this view is supported by the learned Whitaker. "The native roughness of their manners," he says on the subject of the Saxons, "would insensibly be smoothed, and the natural attachment of their minds to idolatry

<sup>1</sup> Quod in tantum salubriter factum est, ut in illis locis etiam nunc fides intemerata perduret.

<sup>2</sup> It is hoped that no difference of opinion to that expressed in St. Augustine's Life, is here put forth. In fact the materials of this work were prepared long before that Life came out, and hitherto nothing more than the headings of the chapters and an occasional paragraph have been seen by the writer of St. German's Life. Collier, p. 124, tom. i. Ed. 8vo.

imperceptibly softened, by their perpetual intercourse with the Britons, to whom they allowed the free exercise of their religion. And the British Churches in general appear to have remained undestroyed by the Saxons, and some of them even applied to their original uses. In the stipendiary town of Canterbury, no less than two continued to the Saxon conversion, and one of these seems to have been regularly used through all the period of idolatry as the temple of the provincials at Canterbury, &c. Indulged with this reasonable liberty, and opposed by no passionate prejudice, the Britons would successfully propagate the doctrines of Christianity, &c. A deep impression would silently have been made on the Saxons, gradually detach them from their idolatry, and greatly prepare them for Christianity. And we find them accordingly, some time before the arrival of Augustine, *and when no attempts had been made to convert them by the Britons of Wales*, actually prepared for conversion, and very desirous of the Gospel, &c.”<sup>1</sup>

This subject, which more properly belongs to the life of St. Augustine, it seemed necessary cursorily here to introduce, in order to estimate properly the advantages which St. German procured to our Church, and which in all probability were not destroyed when St. Austin came to revive religion in England.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hist. Manch. p. 360, 361, 362. He refers to Greg. Ep. 58, in Bede 678, “Desideranter velle converti,” and Lib. i. c. 22. See also Ep. 59.

<sup>2</sup> The same view is substantially taken by Alford, ad an. 440, who observes, that St. Austin was sent as the converter of the Saxons and Angles only, and not in any wise to the Britons. St. German was the Apostle of the Britons, St. Austin of the Saxons, but neither were the original founders of Christianity in this island. Of course Cressy follows Alford.

A general idea of the customs and teaching of German and his companions, is supposed by our own Selden to be shown in the testimony of Giraldus Cambrensis,<sup>1</sup> who lived in the twelfth century, and whose words are as follows :<sup>2</sup> “ Formerly and long before the ruin of Britain, during nearly two hundred years, the natives had been established and confirmed in the faith through the instrumentality of Faganus and Damianus, who were sent into the island by Pope Eleutherius, at the request of King Lucius. From which time, including that when German of Auxerre and Lupus of Troyes (on account of the corruptions which had crept in from the invasions of the Pagans and Saxons, and especially in order to expel the Pelagian heresy,) were sent into the island, the natives had nothing heretical, nothing contrary to sound doctrine, in their belief. From these same Saints and Bishops they also received and kept up to our time the following practices, as we are told.<sup>3</sup> Whenever any bread is served up, they (that is, the Welsh) first give a corner of it to the poor. They sit in companies of three at dinner in honour of the Trinity. Whenever a Monk or a Priest, or any one bearing a religious habit appears, they cast down their arms, bend their head, and demand a blessing. No other nation seeks so earnestly for Episcopal confirmation and the unction of the

<sup>1</sup> Vid. p. 59. *Analecton Anglo-Britanicon* Joan. Selden. Frankfort, 1615.—Giraldus Cambrensis, apud Camden. *Anglo. Scripta*. p. 891. Ed. 1603. Frankfort.—Alford ad an. 440.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. *Biog. Uni.* His original name was Barry, and his surname shows he was Welsh. He was of high birth, and travelled a great deal. But his works are spoilt, it is said, by great vanity and affectation, and not always to be depended upon.

<sup>3</sup> Ut fertur.

Chrism, both which impart the Grace of the Spirit. They give tithes of all their possessions, cattle and sheep, when they marry, when they undertake a journey, or submit to the discipline of the Church in the reformation of their lives. This partition of their property they call the Great Tithes. Two parts they give to the Church where they are baptized, the third to the Bishop of their diocese. In preference to all other journeys, they undertake that to Rome, with pious minds and reverence for the threshold of the Apostles. They show due veneration for Churches and Ecclesiastical persons, and the relics of Saints, and portable bells,<sup>1</sup> the ornamented Volume of the Gospels,<sup>2</sup> and the Cross ; in this indeed they surpass all other nations. Hence their Church enjoys more secure peace than any other. For not only in cemeteries, but even elsewhere by means of land-marks and ditches, placed by the Bishops to preserve order, their cattle are able to feed without disturbance. In the most ancient and venerable Churches, when the cattle go out in the morning, and when they return at evening, the Clergy give them their benediction. If any one has incurred the

<sup>1</sup> *Campanis Bajulis.* “*Campanæ Bajulæ quæ præ manibus haberi et deferri possunt.*” *Silvester Giraldus in Topogr. Hibern. c. 33.*—“*Hoc etiam non prætereundum puto, quod Campanas bajulas, baculosque Sanctorum in superiore parte recurvos, auro et argento vel ære contextos, in magna reverentia tam Hiberniæ et Scotiæ quàm Gwalliæ populus et Clerus habere solent: ita ut sacramenta super hæc longe magis quam super Evangelia et præstare vereantur et pejerare.*”—*Apud Ducange. Campana.*

<sup>2</sup> *Libris textis.* “*Textus; Liber seu Codex Evangeliorum, qui inter cimelia Ecclesiastica reponi solet, auro gemmisque ut plurimum exornatus, aureis etiam interdum characteribus exaratus.*”—*Ducange.*

deadly enmity of his sovereign, and seeks for refuge in the Church, he will there find peace for himself and his kinsfolk. In this privilege indeed, which far exceeds the indulgence of the canons, which only offer safety to the body and members, many go great lengths and make their refuge the occasion of plunder. Nowhere else you will see Hermits and Anchorites more ascetic, more spiritual. Though all the people (the Welsh) have a natural vehemence of disposition, and you will find none worse than bad men among them, yet you will not find better men than their good men."

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### *More English Traditions.*

THUS much can be depended upon, with regard to this second visit of German to Britain, as coming from the authority of Constantius, who has all along been taken as a sure witness. But it has been hinted already that our Saint's renown in England by no means depends upon the narrative of this writer alone, (one might almost say, *at all*.) Nothing was more popular among our ancient countrymen than the Legends of St. German. Did an Englishman in the ninth century go abroad, he was sure to be questioned about St. German, and he had many things to relate, which Constantius had passed over, but which were in the mouth of every body in England. "This country," says Hericus of

Auxerre, "which is the first among islands, has a peculiar devotion towards the blessed German, and its inhabitants acknowledge themselves to owe many great blessings to him : they were enlightened, say they, by his teaching, they were purified from heresy twice by him, they were honoured by many miracles which he performed among them." Accordingly, when a pious monk of the name of Mark came over from England, and took up his abode in the monastery of St. Medard and St. Sebastian, at Soissons, in France, he had many things to tell the foreign enquirer which were not generally known abroad. And these, he asserted positively, were contained in the Catholic Histories of Britain, and might be read by any one therein."<sup>1</sup>

About the very time when St. Mark (for he was a Saint) was instructing Hericus, Nennius was writing his history of Britain in England, that is, in 858, according to the Prologue. Nennius then is, after Bede, the earliest English testimony which we possess concerning St. German. But as critics are, with reason, afraid of admitting the facts he relates without great caution, the reader will be pleased to consider this chapter as the continuation of a former one, entitled English Traditions.

It appears that the arrival of the Saxons, Vortigern's crimes and misfortunes, St. German's presence, and Merlin's prophecies, are facts all brought together by this author. Among the earlier events of Vortigern's reign occurred, he says, the arrival of Horsa and Hengist ; the account reads like romance. "In the meantime, three skiffs,<sup>2</sup> banished from Germany, touched the land. In these were Horsa and Hen-

<sup>1</sup> Heric. de Mirac. 80.

<sup>2</sup> Ciulæ.

gist, who were brothers, the sons of Guictgils, the son of Guitta, the son of Guectha—Vuoden—Frealaf—Fredulf—Finn—Folcwald—Geta, who was, as they say, the son of God. This is not the God of gods, Amen, the God of Hosts, but one of their idols whom they worshipped...Vortigern received them kindly, and gave them the island which in the Saxon language is called Thanet, but in the British tongue Ruohim.”

Then came St. German to Britain, where he preached, and performed many miracles, among which Nennius selects the following legend, the character of which must stand by its own merits, and not be supposed to affect in any way the more genuine miracles of German before related. “There was a certain wicked king, a perfect tyrant, of the name of Benli. Him the Saint proposed to visit, and therefore hastened to go and preach to him. When the man of God had come to the gate of the town with his companions, the guard approached and saluted them, whereupon they sent him to the king. The king returned a harsh answer, saying, with an oath, “Should they remain there till the end of the year, they never shall enter my town.” While they were waiting for the guard to bring back the answer of the king, evening came on, and night advanced, and they knew not where they should go, when one of the king’s servants arrived, and having bowed himself before the man of God, related to him the words of the king. He then invited them to his cottage, (which probably was out of the town); they went with him, and he entertained them kindly. Their host had only one cow, with her calf. This latter he killed, and having roasted it, placed it before them. Then St. German enjoined them not to break any of the bones, and the next day the calf was found with its mother,

whole and alive. When German had risen in the morning, he asked for an interview with the king. While he was waiting at the gate, a man came running up to him with the sweat running down from his face. He bowed himself. St. German said to him, 'Dost thou believe in the Holy Trinity?' He answered, 'I believe,' and was baptized; and German kissed him, and said to him, 'Go in peace, in this same hour thou shalt die; the angels of God await thee in the air, that thou mayest go with them to the Lord, in whom thou hast believed.' Then the man returned with joy to the citadel, where the Prefect arrested him, and bound him; after which, he was led before the tyrant and put to death; for it was a custom with the cruel tyrant to have every one killed who, before sunrise, did not return to his service in the citadel. In the meantime, German and his companions remained the whole day before the gate of the city, without obtaining leave to see the king. The servant who before had entertained them, did not neglect them. St. German said to him, 'Take care that none of your friends remain in the citadel this night.' The servant then returned to the citadel, and brought away his children to the number of nine, and his guests followed him to the same abode as before. St. German bid them remain fasting, and having shut the doors, said, 'Watch, and if any thing should occur, be careful not to look to the citadel, but pray unceasingly, and cry to the Lord.' After a short interval, in the night, fire fell from heaven, and consumed the citadel, with all that were with the tyrant, and they have never been found, continues Nennius, to this time, nor has the fort ever been rebuilt. The day after, the man who had so hospitably received them, believed and was baptized, with all his children;



and the whole country followed his example. His name was Catel. And German blessed him and said, 'There shall not be wanting a king of thy seed ; and thou thyself from this day shalt be sole king.' The saying proved true. The servant was made the king, and all his children became kings, and by their posterity the whole country of the Pouisi is even now governed."

However Vortigern was becoming daily more intimate with his Saxon guests. "Then," says Nennius, "Satan entered into his heart, and he fell in love with the daughter of Hengist, and he promised half of his kingdom to have her in marriage." Thus was the county of Kent given away. Soon after, a fresh body of strangers arrived from the German coasts, at Vortigern's invitation. These were Oetha and Ebissa, with forty skiffs, who, at the request of the king, sailed towards the Picts, and laid waste the Orkney Islands, and settled in the country which lies on the confines of the Picts. Vortigern was hastening the ruin of his country by his follies and his vices. As a crowning of his wickedness, he married his own daughter, and had a son by her. Upon hearing which, St. German came, with all the British Clergy, to reprove him. A large Synod was convened, at which the Clergy and laity attended. The king then ordered his daughter to present herself to the assembly, and deliver the child to German, declaring that German himself was the father of it. She acted as she was instructed. German, however, received the child with benevolence, and said, 'Yes, I will be a father to thee, nor will I part with thee, unless a razor with tongs and comb be given me, and thou transfer them to thy father according to the flesh.' The child obeyed, and advanced towards Vortigern, his father and grandfather at the same time, and

he said to him, 'Thou art my father ; shave my head—the hair of my head.' Vortigern remained silent, and would not answer the child, but rose up in a great rage, and fled from the presence of St. German. He was then condemned, and anathematized by St. German and all the Council of the Britons. This Council, we learn, was held at Guarthernia (probably in Wales.) When Vortemir, the son of Vortigern, saw that his father had been condemned for incest by German, and by the British Clergy, and had taken flight, he came and threw himself at the feet of the Saint, and asked his pardon. Then, on account of the calumny which his father and sister had spread against German, he decreed that ever after the land on which the Bishop had suffered the ignominy should be his property. Hence, in memory of St. German, it received the name of Guartheunia, (or Guarthernia) which, by interpretation, is "The calumny justly repulsed."<sup>1</sup>

It would be too long to follow Vortigern into his retirement at Snowden, where he built a castle, to consolidate which, he was advised by wizards (the constant companions of abandoned sovereigns) to sprinkle the blood of a child which had no father. Suffice it to say, the famous prophet, the very Merlin was found, who was also called Ambrosius, and was the son of a Roman Consul. In the meantime, Vortemir undertook the cause of the Britons, which his father had betrayed to the Saxons, and was victorious in four battles, in the last of which he died. After his death, Vortigern was taken captive treacherously by the Saxons, and obliged to deliver up to them Essex and Sussex for his ransom. "However,"

<sup>1</sup> See Nennius, p. 30, p. 35, and Usher, p. 385.

continues Nennius, " St. German did not desist from preaching to Vortigern to turn to the Lord. But the king fled to the region which owes its name to him, Guorthigirniaun, where he concealed himself with his wives. But St. German followed with all the British clergy ; and there he remained forty days and forty nights, praying upon the rock, and standing night and day. Then Vortigern again ignominiously retired to the fort of Guorthigirn, which is in the country of the Demeti, (including Cardiganshire, Carmarthenshire, and Pembrokeshire) near the river Teibi (now called Teify.) Still St. German followed him, and when he arrived he remained three days and as many nights fasting with the whole clergy that accompanied him. On the fourth night, about midnight, the entire fortress, struck by fire from heaven, fell to the ground ; and Vortigern with all who were with him, and his wives, disappeared." Such was the end of this ill-fated monarch, the account of which Nennius professes to have found in the Book of St. German, though there were, he adds, other reports. The names of Vortigern's legitimate sons have already been given, Vortimer, Categirn, Parcent. It is somewhat remarkable that the offspring of his incestuous marriage became a Saint, under the name of Saint Faustus. After the miraculous obedience which he had displayed in the way above related, he was baptized and educated by St. German ; and having built a monastery on the banks of the river Renis, he there devoted himself to the service of God.

Such are the deeds and transactions which in early times were connected with the name of German in this Island. In fact, they constituted the popular legend of that Saint, and went much farther towards

rendering him familiar to the English, than the more authentic narratives of Constantius and Bede. Nor is Nennius the only one who loved to explore the rich mine of the Legend of St. German ; Henry of Huntingdon, John Gerbrand of Leyden, Galfridus, Matthæus Florilegus, and many others, transmitted in their turn the well known story which was identified with many a national and local sympathy. Here was to be found the origin of the names of towns, and churches ; the clue to famous councils and victories. At the same time the great political revolution which German, if he did not witness, yet saw impending upon the nation, and the never forgotten British associations with which his name was allied, and which were stored up in the mountains of Wales, gave a popularity to his name, which it is somewhat surprising should so completely have died away.

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### *St. German and the Barbarians.*

SCARCELY had German returned from his last expedition to Britain in the year 447, when he found a new field open for his exertions. The occasion was a deputation sent by the Armorican confederacy to entreat his assistance against their two united enemies, the Roman generals and their allies the Barbarian Alani. That a holy Bishop should be applied to, may surprize us at first, but will cease to do so when the nature of the case is explained. However, in order to understand how Barbarians came to be the allies of Romans against a Christian and orthodox

people, it will be necessary to go back a few years, to their first introduction into Gaul. First, let it be observed, the Alani, against whom the Armoricans chiefly demanded succour, were a race of Huns, stationed on the banks of the Loire, near Orleans, to repress the rebels, and who acted under the conduct of their king, Eochar.

The position of the different Barbarians in Gaul at this time was as follows. The Franks, the "heathen and perfidious Franks,"<sup>1</sup> occupied a part of the northern provinces of the two Belgicæ and the second Germanica, a district which now might be said to extend from the banks of the river Somme, in Picardy, towards those of the Moselle. The Visigoths possessed the greater part of the western and south-western provinces, south of the river Loire, called at that time Narbonnensis Prima, Novempopulania and the Second Aquitania. The Burgundians were settled in the east of Gaul, in the provinces of Germanica Prima and Maxima Sequanorum, answering to the modern Alsace, Franche-comté and Switzerland. These were the three great divisions of Barbarians. With regard to the two latter, it is to be remarked that they were Christians, though Arians. "In every nation," says Salvian, "there were two kinds of Barbarians, the Pagans and the Heretics."<sup>2</sup> Of the former class were another large tribe of men, who besides these, had entered into Gaul, though they had as yet no settled abode, and with whom the History of St. German is more immediately connected. These were the Alani mentioned already, a section of the Huns; both which races, parent and offspring, deserved the epithets of "rapacious,

<sup>1</sup> Salvian, p. 89. Dubos, tom. i. p. 438. Thierry *Lettres sur la France*.  
<sup>2</sup> p. 86.

drunken, impure.”<sup>1</sup> The great leader of the Huns, Attila, entered Gaul a few years later ; the detachment of them here in question, was introduced somewhat earlier and in a very different way.

Among the political intrigues which disturbed the imperial court at Ravenna, many will remember the famous quarrel of Aetius, the great Roman general, and Count Boniface, his worthy rival, who commanded in Africa. How this quarrel was connected with the entry of the Alani into Gaul is now to be shown. The crisis of their feud took place in a meeting of the two rivals in the plains of Italy on the field of battle. Boniface was victorious, but he died of his wounds.<sup>2</sup> Aetius, deprived by the Empress Placidia and her son Valentinian of his dignity and titles, retired into the land of the Huns, who were then governed by Rugila, the father of Attila. Here he received the most cordial welcome. An alliance ensued between the savage chieftain and the Roman exile which subsisted for a long time.<sup>3</sup> In the year 435, after two years’ banishment, the indispensable Aetius was again restored to the favour of the court. The highest honour of the age was bestowed upon him ; he was made Patrician. At this juncture he sent to his associates, the Huns, to obtain troops to defend Gaul against its many assailants. A large body of these who went by the name of Alani, were accordingly enlisted in the Roman armies ; and shortly after Aetius stationed a great number on the banks of the Loire. Their very entry into Gaul was prophetic of their future behaviour. They made a violent attack upon

<sup>1</sup> Salvian, p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> *Prosp. Chron.* 432. Dubos, p. 353, tom. i. Gibbon, tom. iv.

<sup>3</sup> Dubos, p. 362.

the Burgundians, the mildest and most equitable of the Barbarian settlers, and killed twenty thousand of them, according to Gibbon. Certain it is that a great part of the Burgundians are represented to have perished in the massacre, to which Aetius, the Patrician, was not altogether a stranger. This act was the more savage, as a treaty had lately been made with the Burgundians.<sup>1</sup>

The next enemy against whom the Alani were employed were the Visigoths. Here the reason was more just. The Visigoths were daily taking advantage of the disturbed state of the empire. "They were ever violating treaties," says St. Prosper, "and continued to obtain possession of the greater number of the large towns which were situated near their kingdom. Narbonne they were now aiming at eagerly."<sup>2</sup> But Narbonne was rescued by the reinforced troops of Aetius; and the Visigoths were repeatedly conquered.<sup>3</sup> The new allies of the Romans by this time rendered the imperial army a match for the Goths. The Gothic nations were skilful in the management of the sword and the spear, but they were deficient in horse. The Scythian tribes on the contrary, and among them the Alani, possessed a superior cavalry, and they were equally expert in governing their warlike steeds, and using the bow and arrow and other missiles. After these victories, Aetius stationed a great part of his allies at or near Orleans, under the conduct of their king Sambida, for reasons which will soon be explained, and in consequence of which the Armorican confederacy were afterwards obliged to apply to St. German. Then Aetius departed to Rome.

<sup>1</sup> Prosper, Chron. ad an. 435. Montesquieu *Esprit des Lois*, tom. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Prosp. ad an. 436.

<sup>3</sup> Prosp. ad an. 438.

In his absence, Littorius Celsus, the commanding officer of the Romans, urged by the opportunity of distinguishing himself, notwithstanding a treaty which had been made with the Visigoths, made war upon them. Let us hear Prosper.<sup>1</sup> "Littorius, who acted as lieutenant of the Patrician Aetius in the command of the auxiliary troops of the Huns or Alani, desirous of eclipsing the reputation of his superior, and trusting in the oracles of Augurs and the promises of Devils, imprudently engaged with the Visigoths. The event showed that any thing might have been expected from his army ; but a general was wanting. His troops were beaten, but not till they had broken the ranks of the enemy, and Littorius was taken prisoner ; and so the defeat was decisive." This action took place near Toulouse. Theodoric was king of the Visigoths. Littorius was put to death.<sup>2</sup> After this fatal engagement, peace was again made with the Visigoths, through the instrumentality of Avitus, the future emperor, the father-in-law of the poet and scholar Sidonius Apollinarius, and a native of Auvergne.<sup>3</sup>

It was a difficult thing to find safe occupation for the restless Alani. Do something they must. At a loss for an occasion, they might turn and attack their own employers ; but there was as yet no need for that. It has already been stated in a previous chapter, and supposed in this, that in the north-western parts of Gaul, a large League or Confederacy existed, under the name of the Armorican Republic, to the standards of which all the rebels of the Empire, who did not join the Barbarians, flocked. The Armoricans were a

<sup>1</sup> Prosp. ad an. 439.      <sup>2</sup> Dubos, tom. i. p. 374, &c.

<sup>3</sup> Sidon. in Paneg. Aviti. vers. 297.



Christian and orthodox people, who inhabited the second and third Lugdunensis : that is, the whole of the country north of the Loire, as far as Orleans and the Seine.<sup>1</sup> With the rest of the ancient inhabitants of Gaul, they came into the dominion of the Romans in Julius Cæsar's time. They have always been noted for that independence and energy of character which afterwards were so often displayed in the annals of France, and not long since evinced in the neighbouring plains of La Vendée. Armorica did not obtain the name of Brittany till after the conquest of Great Britain by the Saxons, when great numbers of Britons, as is well known, took refuge there. The Armorican confederacy however embraced what is now called Normandy, a name likewise of later use.<sup>2</sup> In the early part of the fifth century the Armoricans were particularly known for their spirit of insubordination. Constantius speaks "of the insolence of that proud people," and "their presumption which required a severe lesson ;" and again animadverts "on the changeableness and fickleness which prompted a restless and undisciplined people to frequent rebellions."<sup>3</sup> And in the ninth century, Hericus of Auxerre, whose masters Charlemagne, Louis-le-Débonnaire, and Charles-le-Chauve, had to deal with this people, describes them as "stern, haughty, boastful, forward, imprudent, rebellious, fickle, ever changing from love of novelty, profuse in words, less ready to make them good ; esteeming it an honour

<sup>1</sup> " Gens inter geminos notissima clauditur amnes,  
Armoricana prius veteri cognomine dicta."

Hericus, vit. Met. lib. v. ch. 1. See also Tillem. xv. p. 20, Dubos, p. 439 and p. 69.

<sup>2</sup> Dubos, p. 439.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. ii. § 62. Lib. ii. § 73.

to promise much and perform little." Allowing for considerable colouring on the part of advocates for the opposite cause, yet it is not surprising if they were such as they are described. In fact, the Armoricans were nothing less than rebels ; their republic was not of such long standing that Constantius could regard them otherwise than as disobedient Roman subjects. They were, if not the whole, yet the greater part of that vast coalition of insurgents who went by the name of Bagaudæ. It may seem singular to attempt to differ with a contemporary writer of such great claims to respect as Constantius, but he himself, who bears witness to the fact, undoubtedly would have acknowledged the justness of the reasons which palliate the offence of these Insurgents. The very name of Bagaudæ, like that of Chartists in England, was expressive of contempt and abhorrence ; and names have a prestige about them, which it requires definition and analysis to dissipate. But let us listen to Salvian, another contemporary author.<sup>1</sup> "It is the injustice of the Romans which has constrained men, all over the Empire, no longer to remain Romans. I am speaking of the Bagaudæ. Spoiled, harassed, murdered by wicked and cruel judges, they have lost all the rights of Roman liberty—they relinquish the honour of the Roman name. We impute to them their misfortunes ; we cast in their teeth the name which distinguishes their misery—a name of which we are the sole cause. We call them rebels, we call them abandoned men ; but their guilt is ours. What else has made them Bagaudæ but our iniquities, the crying injustice of our magistrates, the proscriptions, the pillage exercised by

<sup>1</sup> De Guber. p. 108. ed. Baluz.

those who turn the public exactions into private extortion and spoil, who make the assessment of taxes the occasion for plunder ; who, like ferocious wild beasts, instead of ruling their dependants, devour them. Nor are they content with plunder alone, but they feast, so to say, upon the blood of their victims. Hence it has happened, that men mangled and half killed by iniquitous judges, have begun to assume a position like that of the Barbarians—in fact, they were not suffered to be Romans.....What do we see every day ? Those who are not Bagaudæ yet, are compelled to become so.”

The first great insurrection took place about 434.<sup>1</sup> Prosper says ; “The northern provinces of Gaul having been seduced by Tibato, seceded from the Roman alliance, which was the first cause of that general confederacy of the Bagaudæ to which all the servile classes in Gaul acceded.” Nothing more is known of Tibato ; the spirit of rebellion which he inflamed, spread rapidly, and concentrated itself in the country of the Armoricans. To these all the slaves and oppressed tenants, and degraded burghers, and ruined *curiales*, looked for protection, during the vast system of oppression that was choking the last feeble breathings of the Roman existence. And no more urgent motive had Aetius the Patrician, in sending for troops from the Huns and Alani, than to subdue the ever-increasing numbers of the insurgents. Accordingly, as we have seen, he stationed a large body of Alani near Orleans, as being the frontier town. In all the wars with the Visigoths, a sketch of which has been given, the Armoricans were sure to take a part, always siding with the enemies of the Romans ; and in all the treaties

<sup>1</sup> Dubos, tom. i. p. 355.

which were made, the Armorican interests claimed due consideration. It was somewhat strange to see the orthodox Armoricans combining with the heretical Visigoths, at a time and in a country where Arianism was such a distinct mark of separation. But it was still more strange that the Christian Romans should call in the Pagan Huns to conquer Christians and Catholics. As yet, however, Aetius and his generals had not been able to make a regular attack upon the Armoricans ; his efforts had been chiefly directed towards the principality of Toulouse. But by means of Sambida and his men, posted on the banks of the Loire, he kept a vigilant eye over their movements.

In 446, a year before St. German returned from Britain, an attempt was made against them, which has been recorded by St. Gregory of Tours, in his life of St. Mesmius, a disciple of St. Martin. It appears that Aetius was himself compelled to depart, to make head against Clodion, the king of the Franks, who was advancing by slow but steady steps, in the north-east of Gaul. Egidius Afranius, the same as Count Giles, took the command of the army on the Loire, the Barbarian chief acting probably under his guidance. St. Gregory, a native of those parts which previously belonged to the Armorican Confederacy, and accordingly a favourer of the cause of his country, relates the following circumstance :<sup>1</sup> “ St. Mesmius came to Chinon, a fortified place near to Tours, and there he founded a monastery. Afterwards, Egidius besieged the town, into which all the inhabitants of the district had fled for refuge, and caused the well, which was situated on the ridge of the hill where the besieged came to draw

<sup>1</sup> De Gloria Conf. c. 22.—See Dubos, p. 433.

water, to be filled up. The servant of God, who was shut up within the place, seeing with grief the companions of his fortunes dying for want of water, passed a whole night in prayer. He implored God not to suffer the people to perish from thirst, and to thwart the designs of the enemy. St. Mesmius then had a revelation. At the dawn of day, he assembled the besieged, and said unto them, "Let all who have vessels for water, place them in the open air, and ask with confidence the help of the Lord. He will give you abundance of water ; more than is necessary for yourselves and children." He scarcely had ended, when the sky became covered with dark clouds, and the rain fell amid vivid streaks of lightning and the roll of thunder. The besieged were doubly benefited. The storm which gave them water, obliged the assailants to relinquish their works. The buckets of all were filled. Thus, adds St. Gregory, did the prayers of St. Mesmius avail to raise the siege of Chinon. The rustics afterwards retired without injury to their former dwellings."

Armorica then was a land of Saints. And Saints stood up in the defence of the Republic. There is a stage in oppression and injustice where insurrection is a kind of necessary consequence, and the laws of passive obedience seem suspended by the overpowering guilt of the governing party, or rather when to violate the duty of forbearance and patience has its excuse in the human infirmity, which cannot but exist in large bodies of men. No precedent or example may be quoted to sanction any violation of duty, but in looking back upon past times, a national sin, which is incurred under peculiarly trying circumstances and imminent danger, deserves, perhaps, some charitable apology. The Church that denounces the living sinner, hopes

for the dead. To both Constantius and Salvian the insurgents were Bagaudæ; but with the latter, the excuse for them is explicit, with the former it is implied, in that St. German interceded for them, as will be seen.

The Alani or Huns were but too ready to second Egidius in his attack upon the Armoricans. In 447-448, when St. German returned from Britain, Eochar had succeeded Sambida,<sup>1</sup> as king of the Barbarians. The same fierce and rapacious disposition was displayed by this chieftain as by his predecessor. Valesius thinks he is the same with Vitricus or Jutricus, whom St. Prosper mentions as a Roman ally, in 439, and marks out for his exploits at battle.<sup>2</sup> However, it would not require much to induce the greedy Alani to rush upon a prey so inviting as must have been the land of the Armoricans, if we may trust to descriptions. Situated along the Loire, on the confines of the enemy, the least occasion would be seized for a plundering expedition. A historian of the time of François Premier, apparently a native of Britany, when relating the early annals of the Armoricans, takes the opportunity to give the following picture of their country.<sup>3</sup> As its primitive simplicity and antiquated French can hardly be translated, the original will best serve to give an idea of the local advantages of this province.

<sup>1</sup> Or Sangibanus.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Not. Bolland. ad locum Const. Recueil des Historiens, tom. i. p. 632, ad notas. Dubos, tom i. p. 384.

<sup>3</sup> Grandes Chronique de Bretagne, published at Caen, 1518, and thus headed; "The author of this book came into England in embassy with Mr. François de Luxembourg, S. Charles Marigny, m. 4 reign 9 K. U. 8. vid. Fol. 220. Bodlei. Biblio.

“Le royaume de Bretagne qui jadis fut appelé Armorique est situé es extrémités d’occident vers la fin de Europe, et est de la forme d’un fer à cheval dont la rotondité est circuyée à soleil resconsant de la mer océane ; et de gros et dangereux rochers qui sont chascun tout convers et descouverts de la mer. Lesquels rochers nuisent aux navires d’aborder à la terre. Par le haut vers orient joint à ce royaume le bas pays de Normendie, Le Mans, Anjou, Poictou. En ce royaume ya plaines et montaignes, prèz, forestz, rivières, et landes. Les plaines croissent bons fromens, sègles, avoynes, riz, saffran, poix, fèves, aulx, oignons et autres fruitz. Les landes et montaignes on engresse force bestail. En aucuns lieux devers occident on fait le sel par singulière industrie. Car à ce faire ny a que l’eau de la mer et la vertu du soleil, et de ce sel toutes les contrées voisines et austres sont fournies et pourvues. À l’environ de ceste Bretagne, sont en mer plusieurs isles habitées qui sont de la dicte Bretagne où il ya estangs et forestz et y croissent blez, vis (?) et autres commodités. Les forestz de ceste Bretagne sont peuplées de venoysons et gibiers à foyson. Et ya en aucuns lieux mynières de argent, plomb, et fer. En plusieurs lieux y croissent vins en abondance pour fournir les habitans sans en vouloyent contenter. Par mer arrivent es ports et havres du pays toutes marchandises, &c.”—Lib. ii. p. 34.

Such was the country upon which the impatient Alani were now to be let loose. Aetius, the Magnificent, (this was the high-sounding title of the Patrician) irritated by the haughty conduct of the Armoricans, resolved to humble them by those, whom it was as dangerous to employ as it was to leave inactive. He gave orders to Eochar, king of the Alani, (the

fierceness of whose disposition did not belie his birth,) to enter with his men the provinces north of the Loire.<sup>1</sup> The command was readily obeyed ; and the Armoricans were obliged to give way before the onset of the Barbarians. As an only resource in their distress, they sent a deputation to German, who was now returned to Gaul, to request his intercession with the enemy. It will be remembered that twenty-nine years before this event, German had himself been governor of the provinces which desired his assistance, with the title of Duke of the Armorican and Nervican district, including five provinces, the two Aquitains, the second and third Lugdunensis, and Senonia, in which Auxerre was situated.<sup>2</sup> We are not strictly told that the application of the Armoricans was founded upon any reasons arising from this circumstance ; yet we can hardly help conjecturing that some such consideration had its weight. The exceeding holiness of his life was however the ostensible reason of the embassy. Old as he was, for he was in his seventieth year, they deemed he alone could check the Pagan and savage Huns. German, confident in the all-powerful strength of Christ, says Constantius, set out without delay. The Alani had already begun their march. No time was to be lost ; their troops and cavalry loaded with iron armour, already filled the high roads. The Bishop of Auxerre advanced to meet them. Passing through their ranks, he penetrated to their king Eochar, who followed in

<sup>1</sup> The Bollandists are evidently right in reading Alanorum, not Alemannorum, with Surius ; both reason and MSS. prove it. The Bodl. MS. of Constantius, and all those quoted by Boschius have the same. So also in Salvian, p. 89, read Alani, not Almanni, and perhaps instead of Albani.

<sup>2</sup> Notitia Dignit. Imperii.



the rear. Fearless of the numbers that surrounded him, German drew near, accompanied by an interpreter. He then began to address the king in the language of a suppliant. But when he saw his petition was disregarded, he proceeded to reproofs. At last, when all was vain, stretching forth his arm, and laying hold of the reins of his horse, he stopped his progress, and that of the rest of the army. It was expected this rash act would have cost him dear. But the king was struck with astonishment and admiration. God seemed to have moved his iron heart. Reverence and awe, for which the wild and vague Scythian superstition offered no incentive, appeared, for the first time, on the fierce visage of the Barbarian, at the sight of German's courage, his authoritative demeanour, his august countenance.<sup>1</sup> The result was, that the preparations for war, and the vast concourse of arms, were converted into the more peaceful measures of a public conference. The king consented to forego his own desires and those of his men, and to adapt his conduct to the proposals of German. It was agreed that a truce should be observed, till the will of the emperor or his lieutenant, Aetius, were ascertained. The forces were then disbanded, and they retired to their respective stations. Thus, a second time, were the virtues of God's Saints instrumental in averting the otherwise inevitable fury of the Barbarians. Three parallel instances occurred not long after, when the whole nation of the Huns, under Attila, invaded the unfortunate

<sup>1</sup> "Nec templum apud eos visitur, aut delubrum, ne tugurium quidem, culmo tectum cerni usquam potest; sed *gladius* Barbarico ritu humi figitur nudus, eumque ut Martem regionum quas circumcitant præsulem verecundius colunt."—Ammian Marcell. quoted by Gibbon, iv. 238.

Gaul. St. Lupus saved Troyes, St. Anian saved Orleans, St. Genevieve rescued Paris. Like St. German, however, they did not confront the Barbarian. It is perhaps not unworthy of notice, that the same pens which have consigned to memory the ravages of the Barbarians, are they which have attested the miracles. The history of these times is chiefly dependent upon Christian testimony.

The learned Dubos seems to think this interview between German and Eochar took place near Chartres, one of the principal cities in the province of Senonia, called in the Latin Tables Carnotum.<sup>1</sup> But he is wrong when he assigns the date of it to 443, unless Constantius has totally disregarded chronological order. The Bollandists refer it to 447 or 448 with apparent reason.

We have no certain information concerning the particular conditions of the truce granted by Eochar. As a general fact, we learn that the Armoricans were to send immediately to the court of Ravenna some one entrusted with full powers to conclude an agreement with the Emperor ; that measures should be taken for a final conclusion of peace, and a suspension of arms observed by all parties, till the pardon of the Emperor was obtained.

He who had delivered the Armoricans from destruction, was now the person they fixed upon to carry their cause before the Emperor. The combined reasons which had made them select German in the first case, would also mark him out for the present negotiation. Republics, as well as other States, are governed by men of the world. They are glad if skill can be found con-

<sup>1</sup> Tom. i. p. 388.

nected with piety and good report, but they usually determine their choice by the political talents of their representatives, and their practical knowledge and prudence. German's long experience in the civil affairs of the Empire, his previous profession of pleader and magistrate, his acquaintance with the Armorican character and condition from having been Governor of the Provinces—these were circumstances not to be overlooked in a negotiation rendered so difficult by the intrigues of the Court. It might have been expected that the commissioner of the Armoricans would have applied for pardon to Aetius. Aetius was in effect the Emperor in Gaul, and he was very near the scene of the transaction. Yet so it was not. There were good reasons for avoiding him. Aetius was the special adversary of the Armoricans ; he had introduced the Alani originally with a direct intention against them ; he had himself given the order for the late attack ; nor would the frightful massacre of the Burgundians be soon forgotten. On the other hand, the court of Ravenna was likely to adopt measures opposite to those of Aetius. Weak governments are wont to disclaim the acts of their delegates ; and expedients are synonymous with changes and reversals. Then Aetius had never been popular in the imperial circle ; feared, while favoured, he was employed, because his genius and the straits of the times pointed him out as the only support of the empire.

But it may be as well to explain the cause of that influence which from the banks of the Meuse to the coasts of the Adriatic, could, without any express declarations, be so powerfully felt. The following portrait of this extraordinary man is given by Gibbon from a contemporary author.

“ His mother was a wealthy and noble Italian, and his father, Gaudentius, who held a distinguished rank in the province of Scythia, gradually rose from the station of a military domestic to the dignity of master of the cavalry. Their son, who was enrolled almost in his infancy in the guards, was given as a hostage, first to Alaric, and afterwards to the Huns ; and he successively obtained the civil and military honours of the palace, for which he was equally qualified by superior merit. The graceful figure of Aetius was not above the middle stature ; but his manly limbs were admirably formed for strength, beauty, and agility ; and he excelled in the martial exercises of managing a horse ; drawing the bow, and darting the javelin. He could patiently endure the want of food or of sleep ; and his mind and body were alike capable of the most laborious efforts. He possessed the genuine courage that can despise not only dangers, but injuries ; and it was impossible either to corrupt or deceive, or intimidate the firm integrity of his soul.” To which original testimony Gibbon adds in a note, that this flattering portrait would have been more correct, had the author not insisted upon his patient *forgiving* disposition.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

*The Invasion viewed by Contemporaries.*

AND now before we follow St. German into the last events of his busy life, let us pause awhile, to consider what Christians at the time thought of the Invasions of the Barbarians, one tribe of whom we have just seen exterminating on their entrance into Gaul, twenty thousand peaceful Burgundian Colonists, and on the eve of laying waste a rich province of that same country. Living as we do in an age of security, we have the greatest difficulty in entering into the true feelings of men who were placed in the midst of those frightful scenes. No event in real life is like what we fancy it to be in our studies ; no plan which we have prepared at home preserves its identity when thrown into the actualities of the world. Must we then take the contradictory of our expectations for historical truth ? Must we imagine that those who at first sight should seem the most wretched of men, were in point of fact just as well off as we are ? In history there is always a danger of theorizing ; learning may be set off to advantage by an ingenious scaffolding, but its usefulness depends on the solidity of the materials.

However, it is certain from experience, that calamities have almost always their tolerable side. Whether it be that nothing comes to pass without the lapse of time, and time baffles in a thousand ways the apparently unavoidable effects of impending causes ; or that causes in themselves are ever inadequate, or are met by

other antagonist causes, so that the event is less terrible than was expected,—true it is that mankind always find an opening which makes life still dear and hopeful to them. We read of a shocking accident by a rail-road ; the preparatory circumstances come first, then the crash, and we think all must be over. But it so happens that none of our relations perish, though those next to them have been destroyed. Here is our comfort, we care but little about the victims ; the world goes on again as usual ; it is the living who influence, who lead the world ; and as long as there is one living, his judgment, his views are to be regarded.

It seems scarcely deniable that something of this kind took place in Europe during the Invasions of the Barbarians. Salvian talks of a kind of sullen stupor that had come over the world.<sup>1</sup> Men knew they were miserable enough, and were ready to ask why believers in God were the sufferers ;<sup>2</sup> yet the past was soon cast aside and accounted for nothing ; and luxury, vice, extravagance, ambition, public amusements and dissipation, seemed rather to have increased than diminished.<sup>3</sup> Strange to say, the religious feelings which so unprecedented a chain of misfortunes was calculated to produce, degraded a man in themselves from his station in society. “ Religion, says the same author, makes a nobleman a boor.”<sup>4</sup> And the disgraceful phenomenon which was so signally manifested at the time of the French Revolution, had its vivid precedent in the state of Gaul and other countries during the fifth century.

<sup>1</sup> Salvian de Gub. 145. “ Sopor Domini irruerat super eos.” Vid. Tillemont Hist. des Emp. tom. v. 548.

<sup>2</sup> See Gub. Dei, 43, 45, p.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid 126, et 143. “ Assiduitas calamitatum, augmentum criminum fecit.”

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 76.

On the one hand, "language unknown in the Church, perfectly heathen and monstrous, was every where heard; profane exclamations against God, insulting blasphemies : God, they said, had no care for the world, He was no governor, no director, but an unmerciful, ungracious, inhuman, stern, inflexible being."<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, gladiatorial shows grew in esteem. The treasures of the world were spent in bringing from distant countries wild beasts ; it was a livelihood to ferret the deep valleys and the winding mountains of the Alps for the amusements of the theatre.<sup>2</sup> Words failed to describe the various pastimes of men. There were circus, amphitheatres, music rooms, play-houses, pageants, wrestling matches, jugglers, pantomimes, and other ill-timed spectacles without end.<sup>3</sup> In short, laughing was the order of the day.<sup>4</sup> In forcible contrast came the reproach from the mouth of the indignant witness : Christ never laughed !

But there was a remnant, a large remnant, who reflected upon the mysterious dispensations of God that were going on. Never were there more holy bishops, more saintly monks, more devout virgins and matrons, a more zealous clergy. We have high authority for saying that the fifth century produced more canonized Bishops in France than all the subsequent centuries together.<sup>5</sup> Numbers of these servants of God had suffered in the distresses of the age, some death, some spoliation, some tortures, some other various acts of violence. This circumstance aggravated the general calamity, and at the same time increased the perplexity

<sup>1</sup> See Gub. Dis. p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 124.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 126 et 141. Vid. also Aug. Civ. Dei. p. 43. Ben. Nova Ed.

<sup>4</sup> p. 130.

<sup>5</sup> Dubos Hist. Crit. p. 17.

of religious men. How was God's wisdom and justice to be vindicated amid so much innocence and misfortune? That it must and could be vindicated none doubted. The Invasion of the Barbarians, with its cruel consequences, Christian writers had little hesitation in declaring to be a divine punishment for the sins of the world. "I will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes," was the language of the Psalmist which the orthodox pleader would cite. "On account of men's excessive pride, their licentiousness and avarice, their execrable wickedness and impiety, God had visited the earth with a scourge."<sup>1</sup> "We have hardened ourselves, said another, as rocks; the greatest afflictions have not availed to make us feel our wickedness, and notwithstanding this inundation of Barbarians, the natives of Gaul are just as they were."<sup>2</sup>

But was the world worse than it had been two or three centuries back, under Tiberius, Nero, Caligula, Commodus, Heliogabalus? Had not the empire espoused the cause of the Church, and was not Paganism fast dying away? Were there not thousands of holy monks, hermits, virgins, bishops and priests, for a sweet-smelling savour unto the Lord? Why had these very Saints endured cruelties and shame unprecedented? Would not the blasphemies of the heathens receive encouragement if the introduction of Christ's religion and the desertion of Jupiter's temples were announced by such disasters?<sup>3</sup>

To these difficulties it was answered, that come what

<sup>1</sup> St. Aug. Civ. Dei. ch. ix. B. I.

<sup>2</sup> Salvian, p. 141.

<sup>3</sup> St. Aug. Civ. Dei. Lib. i. Passim. Vid. etiam Prosper, Poem. de Providentia, apud Hist. de la Gaule. Bouquet.



would, it was a standing truth, that the reward of the good is not in this world, that no temporal chastisements are to be considered as the full retribution of the reprobate. Why do men look for the recompense of a holy life here on earth? Why do they despond because the wicked have leisure to scoff? Adversity is not for bad men, but for the good. It is true, we may seek reverently to understand the reason of God's dealings with us, because His government is a moral one. Might this then not be, that there is a point at which the Divine justice can no longer endure the accumulated sins of past years, and wrath goes out from Him to spread general devastation? And in thus acting does He not hasten the reward of the good, while he sweeps away the wicked? The delays of God's vengeance are thought a serious objection; but why? If He spares Rome under Nero, He reserves the punishment of her crimes for the next world. If He pours forth His wrath upon Rome under Honorius and Arcadius, who knows but this may be part of a merciful dispensation? He punishes now that he may save hereafter. Some but for this visitation might have died in impenitency. Nay, there is a plain reason why this should be so. If every crime was straightway followed by its corresponding punishment, it might be thought that nothing was left for the last judgment. On the other hand, if no sin was punished in this world, it might be urged that there was no Divine Providence always presiding over the world. However, wisdom is justified of her children.

But there are two cardinal mistakes which men generally make when they dispute the wisdom of God's dealings; either by contemplating only individual cases, they forget the broad principles upon which all govern-

ment hangs ; or they pass over the real nature of the case, and its particulars, in endeavouring to lay down general rules and maxims of justice and prudence. This last error then was also to be noticed, in order to settle the real state of the argument. And in fact, by a close examination into the history of the times, it was observed that a peculiar and minute providence seemed to have been in many cases displayed. The better part of mankind had by no means been so free from guilt as to expect exemption from a general visitation of God. While "kings had become the nursing fathers and queens the nursing mothers" of the Church, a supineness and indifference unknown to times of persecution had crept into the Christian community. A love of worldly things was encroaching even upon the most serious and strict. With the married portion the circumstance was notorious. But retired virgins and monks were now taken up with an idle regard to opinion ; pride and self-deception were making rapid strides. And Christians were beginning to show plainly their secret tenderness for vice, and respect for men's persons, in the unlawful leniency with which the faults of others were treated, and which they denominated charity. But to descend further still into details. When Rhadagaisus, in 406, came rushing like a torrent with his countless multitude of Goths upon the capital of the empire, he was with his whole army exterminated on the plains of Etruria, without loss on the part of the Romans. Now at this very time the Pagans in Rome were vehemently upbraiding the Christians, saying, that Rhadagaisus, the Goth, must of necessity conquer and take the city, because their gods had been exploded and the God of the Christians introduced.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It was a popular saying among the Pagans, "Pluvia deficit causâ Christiani."

Here the destruction of the irresistible Goths seemed to come like a miraculous interposition of Divine Justice. Nothing was better authenticated. The news was brought from all sides to Carthage, where St. Augustine lived. Again, when Rome was captured and pillaged by Alaric, there was this to be remarked that Alaric was a Christian, and a man of high qualities, though a Barbarian. Nor did he suffer promiscuous devastation. The natural chances of war had their play ; but he had given strict orders that the temples of God should be spared, and all who had taken refuge there should be safe from the fury of the soldiery.<sup>1</sup>

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#### CHAPTER XXIV.

##### *St. German at Milan.*

GERMAN was now in the last year of his life ; he was nearly seventy years old, having been born in 378. He had passed thirty years in the fulfilment of the arduous duties of a bishop, a bishop of the fifth century. He had acted in the various capacities of Apostle, spiritual overseer, mediator between nations at war, temporal magistrate, teacher of Gaul, president and counsellor at Synods, adviser of Bishops and Archbishops. At last he was invested with the office of

<sup>1</sup> See St. Aug. Civ. Dei. Lib. I. ch. viii., &c. and Lib. II. ch. iii. Lib. V. ch. xxiii. 22.—St. Chrys. Hom. ad Antioch. § 6. tom. ii. p. 8.—Comp. Le Maistre. Soirées de St. Petersbourg. tom. ii. p. 143-150.—Jeremy Taylor's Serm. on the Entail of Curses, and Chateaubriand's Martyrs.

Ambassador. Never since his ordination had he known peace and tranquillity. Even among so many illustrious prelates, who by their sanctity and vigorous activity preserved some remaining order in the political agitations which disturbed the world, German seemed to stand alone. "He went on," says Constantius, "from strength to strength, according to the Psalmist."

Losing no time, he set off immediately for Italy to discharge his new functions. At first his way lay in the direction which he had previously taken, when he went to Arles through Lyons. He came again to the village in the district of Alesia, where his friend the presbyter Senator lived. It will be remembered that on his former journey through this place, Senator and Nectariola had received him under their hospitable roof, and that his departure had been followed by a remarkable miracle.<sup>1</sup> When he arrived there the second time, Senator presented to him a girl about twenty years old, who was dumb. German then rubbed her mouth, her forehead, and her face, with some oil which he had blessed ; afterwards he took a cup, into which he had broken three small bits of bread ; placing one of the bits into her mouth with his own hands, he bade her swallow it and the others, using a form of grace beforehand. Immediately with a loud voice she pronounced the thanksgiving, swallowed the bread, and obtained the faculty of speaking which she had not possessed till then.

After this miracle, German threw himself into the arms of his friend Senator, with a burst of feeling to which he had not been known to give way ; and having embraced him affectionately, he exclaimed : "Farewell

<sup>1</sup> See Ch. xix. p. 183.

for ever, beloved brother, farewell. God grant that we may meet at the day of judgment without confusion of face ; for on earth we shall never again enjoy the company of each other." In fact he had been granted a foresight of his approaching end.

The attendants which he took with him were few ; probably as few as were consistent with the dignity of a nation's representative, as many as his own modesty would permit. Among these were some of his own clergy. On a former occasion we find he had travelled on horseback ; at his more advanced age, he would not have parted with this small comfort, on a journey of such length and difficulty. However, though he courted privacy, multitudes thronged to meet him. This journey was long after famous ; on all the high roads by which he passed, oratories and images of the cross were subsequently erected, indicating the places where he had stopped to pray and to preach. When Constantius wrote nearly forty years after, he could appeal to them as standing witnesses.

When he came near to Autun, a large multitude issued to receive him. It was his practice to visit the burial places of the Saints, and on this occasion he directed first his steps to the tomb of the Bishop St. Cassian, which according to custom was situated without the town. The tomb of St. Cassian was renowned for the veneration in which it was held by the people. St. Gregory of Tours, at a later period says,<sup>1</sup> it was every where pricked and scraped, and full of holes, from the number of sick persons who had come to be cured of their diseases. This St. Cassian, who must not be confounded with St. Cassian the Martyr, or

<sup>1</sup> Gloria Confess. 74, and Baillet Vie des Saints, Aug. v.

with the famous John Cassian, lived in the fourth century ; he was born at Alexandria, and for a time was Bishop of Ortha, in Egypt. Afterwards he passed into Gaul, and settled at Autun with St. Rheticius, Bishop of that place, and finally succeeded to him in that See. His death, of which no precise account has been left, but which was apparently natural, secured him a place among the Confessors of the time. German, on approaching his sepulchre, beheld on the white stone the figure of the cross, formed, as it were, by the different shades of the marble, a kind of evidence of the departed Saint's virtues. On seeing this, he offered up a prayer as he was wont, and exclaimed : " What art thou doing here, illustrious brother ? " Immediately St. Cassian from the tomb answered in the hearing of all present : " I am enjoying sweet peace without interruption, and waiting for the coming of the Redeemer." Then German replied : " Repose there long in Christ. But do thou intercede earnestly with our Lord Jesus Christ for us and for this people, that we may be esteemed meet to hear the sound of the Divine trumpet, and obtain the joys of a holy resurrection." " Such," remarks Constantius, " was the marvellous gift of German, that he could hold intercourse even with those who were concealed in the grave ; each one of the miracles he performed had its wonders ; but the rarity of examples of this kind adds to our astonishment ; two Saints of great fame who had never been in the presence of each other, were here holding converse together, the one among the living, the other among the dead ; both indeed citizens of the blessed and heavenly Jerusalem, both enjoying already heaven in part, both in part yet sojourning on earth ; he who was already in possession of his country, recognized

his fellow-soldier, still in exile, and responded to his prayers and address."<sup>1</sup>

While German stopped at Autun, surrounded by a large number of people, a man and his wife came to him, and kneeling down, presented their daughter, who was grown up, and afflicted with a grievous infirmity. From her birth, the nerves of her fingers had been contracted, and turned round into the palm of her hand ; the nails had pierced the hand, and penetrated as far as the bones. German then took hold of her fingers, and restored them one by one to their proper direction. When he had done this, so great was his charity in little things, we are told, that with his own hands he condescended to cut the nails of the girl, which had grown to an excessive length.

After this action, he left Autun, and proceeded on his journey to Italy. He had, as yet, advanced but a short way. The road from Auxerre to Milan, by Vienne and the Cottian Alps, is described in the Antonine Itinerary,<sup>2</sup> as being of the extent of six hundred and thirty-four Roman miles. We are not informed by which way St. German went to Italy, but the collection of circumstances may lead to a probable conjecture. There seem to have been three principal roads between Auxerre and Milan, two of which were the same, as far as Vienne. The other lay in the direction of the Jura,<sup>3</sup> taking in Alesia, Dijon, Besançon, Pontarlier, Orbe, Lausanne, St. Maurice, Martigny, and the Great St. Bernard (the Mons Jovis.)

<sup>1</sup> "Votis et alloquio." Vit. S. Germ. Lib. ii. § 64. Boll. and p. 23, MS. Bodlei.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Recueil, des Hist. tom. i. p. 105.

<sup>3</sup> See the Map of Bouquet & Le Beuf, in Recueil des Hist. t. i.

That this road was a frequented one in early times, is shown by the famous massacre of the Christian Legion, called the Theban, by the Emperor Maximian, in the beginning of the fourth century, which took place at Agaunum, the romantic spot since called St. Maurice, from one of the martyred soldiers ; and in the ninth century, the remains of St. Urban and St. Tiburtius, which were brought from Italy to Auxerre, passed by St. Maurice.<sup>1</sup> However, there is more reason to think St. German followed one of the other roads. Tradition affirmed he took Vienne and Vercellæ on his way ;<sup>2</sup> and Hericus of Auxerre, whose attention had been carefully directed to every small circumstance connected with his patron Saint, tells us that the Penine Alps were famous for his miracles, and especially the Mons *minoris* Jovis, which there is every reason to suppose was the Little St. Bernard,<sup>3</sup> as distinguished from the Great St. Bernard, *the* Mons Jovis. This inference is supported by the fact that a village, situated just under the Little St. Bernard, is named to this day Colona Joux, which latter word is a corruption of Jovis ; and perhaps still more by another village, close to the same spot, which is still called St. Germain. And indeed Hericus, in the ninth century, positively affirms that all who go to Rome must unavoidably pass by this way ; and he informs us that the village alluded to was called after St. German, because the body of the Saint not long after rested there, on its return to Gaul ; and a Church in his honour

<sup>1</sup> Heric. de Mir. ch. iii. 109 §.

<sup>2</sup> Ado Viennensis apud Bolland. notas.

<sup>3</sup> See D'Anville Descript. de la France.—Fol. Bosch. Not. ad locum Herici. ch. viii. de Mir. Arrowsmith's last large Atlas, 1832.



was there erected. It is conceived, then, that German went first to Vienne, then to the Little St. Bernard, afterwards to Eporedia, now called Ivrea, and thence to Vercelli, on towards Milan.

During his passage of the Alps, (for of this there is no doubt whatever) he fell in with some workmen who were returning from their labour. Oppressed with their burdens, they had great difficulty in ascending the mountainous steep. They came to the banks of a torrent which, like Alpine torrents, rushed violently down the hill. The stepping-stones which were thrown across, were but uncertain and vacillating. One of the poor travellers was an old and lame man. Seeing this, German took himself the burden on his shoulders, and deposited it on the other side ; then he returned, and carried over the old man in the same way. To appreciate this signal act of charity, we are desired by Constantius to consider the extreme age of German himself. His face, he says, was emaciated by the rigour of his fasts ; he seldom eat any thing but once a week, and then only barley bread ; he never got sleep, except on a hard couch ; was ever employed in long and wearisome journeys, and was hardly able to support himself. Such was the man who, born of noble parents, and raised to the highest stations in the empire, and dignified with the title of Apostle, could lower himself towards a poor old labourer in this touching manner.

Tradition brings German next to Vercelli, where, not St. Eusebius, as Hericus supposes,<sup>1</sup> but some other Bishop, received him, perhaps St. Albinus. The circumstances of his reception and its results, will be best

<sup>1</sup> Heric. de Mir. § 29. Ughellus, Ital. Sacra, tom. iv.

understood at a later period of this narrative. Suffice it to say, that the Bishop desired St. German to dedicate on his return a Church he was building, which he promised to do. It is however to be remarked, that there is still a village near Vercelli, called after St. German.

German arrived at Milan on the Festival of St. Protasius and Gervasius ; that is, the 19th of June, 448.<sup>1</sup> These were the two martyrs whose remains had been discovered by Ambrose, and gave occasion to the well known miracle performed on a blind man. A great many bishops,<sup>2</sup> with other clergy, were assembled for the feast. Milan was a metropolitan See, and one which has ever possessed peculiar and independent privileges. There were fifteen Suffragan Bishops within the diocese.<sup>3</sup> St. Barnabas the Apostle was said to have founded the See of Milan. In all probability St. Lazarus was Bishop when German arrived, if it be true that he was elected in 440, and governed eleven years. He has deserved special mention in the Roman martyrology, and been praised in ten lines of poetry by Ennodius Ticinensis.

We must now imagine St. Lazarus in the principal Church clothed with his pontifical vestments, as for a great festival of the city, after the fashion of the very ancient Mosaic representation of the Archbishop of Ravenna in the Church of San Vitale.<sup>4</sup> He would be dressed in a white surplice or albe, with the pallium, the mark of his dignity, which was now coming into use in the West after the

<sup>1</sup> Bede *Ephemeris Junii*.

<sup>2</sup> Sacerdotes.

<sup>3</sup> Ughellus, *Ital. Sacra*, tom. iv.

<sup>4</sup> See the interesting Drawing in Knight's *Ecclesiastical Architecture of Italy*. Folio, 1842.

custom of the Oriental Churches. This pallium seems to have been very different from the Archiepiscopal pall of a later period, which resembles a stole or scarf passed round the neck and joining over the breast. In the fifth century there is reason to think it was a white woollen chasuble or cloak, which covered nearly the whole body, without seam, and open only at the top to admit the head, descending nearly to the heels, and concealing the greater part of the albe. The significance of this vestment consisted in its being an emblem of the sheep whom the Good Shepherd recovers from its wanderings and places on His shoulders. Hence it was called in Greek the Homophorion.<sup>1</sup> Over the pallium of St. Lazarus, a stole of white silk or other stuff would be hanging on both sides, with a small black or coloured cross at each end. In his right hand he might be carrying an image of the cross, gilt, or of gold, with blue spots at intervals, probably some precious stones of great value. The minor clergy about him would also be clad in white surplices ; some might be carrying the volume of the Gospels, others the censers with frankincense. The tonsure would be different according to the office of the ecclesiastic ; the baldness

<sup>1</sup> See Thomassin. de Discipl.—where the following apposite passage from St. Isidorus Pelusiota, is quoted. Lib. i. Ep. 136. “Episcopi Pallium, ὁμοφοριον ex lanâ, non ex lino contextum, ovis illius, quam Dominus aberrantem quæsit, inventamque humeris suis sustulit, pellem significat. Episcopus enim qui Christi typum gerit, ipsius munere fungitur, atque etiam ipso habitu illud omnibus ostendit, se boni illius ac magni Pastoris imitorem esse, qui gregis infirmitates sibi ferendas proposuit.”

It will be remarked, that a contrary opinion has here been admitted to that which is given in Mr. Palmer's Orig. Lib. vol. ii. p. 322.

of the Archbishop perhaps being more entire, the subordinate clergy having a kind of wreath of hair just above the temples and round by the ears. In this manner would St. Lazarus proceed to celebrate the Mass. He was now at the Altar with his Bishops and Clergy in the middle of the Sacred mysteries, when German, unknown and unexpected, entered the Cathedral. Immediately one of the people who was possessed with an evil spirit screamed out distinctly : " Why dost thou, German, persecute us even into Italy ? Let it suffice thee to have banished us from Gaul, and overcome both us and the waves of the ocean by thy prayers. Why art thou found every where ? Be still, that we also may be in peace." The Church was full of people. Every one turned round with surprise and fear. Each asked his neighbour who German might be. The dress of the traveller was so humble that he might have been overlooked, had not the dignity of his countenance attracted the attention of all. Upon being questioned, he declared who he was. By this time the Bishop of Milan and his assistants had come down from the Bema and Altar ; and signified their profound respect for the Saint of God. They entreated him to heal the madman who had declared his arrival. Then German took him apart into the Sacristy, a place adjoining the Church, where the sacred vessels were kept and the clergy changed their vestments.<sup>1</sup> German there released the afflicted man, and brought him back sound to the multitude who filled the Cathedral. This miracle was followed by others ; many came to be cured of their diseases, and returned in health. Crowds flocked to receive his blessing, and hear him preach.

<sup>1</sup> Ducange ad voc. *Secrarium*.

## CHAPTER XXV.

*St. German at Ravenna.*

GERMAN soon left Milan, and proceeded towards Ravenna. He had not gone far when he was met by some beggars, who requested an alms. Having enquired of a Deacon who attended him, how much there was in the bag, he was told, three pieces of gold, "Give them all," he said. The Deacon surprised, asked what they themselves were to live upon. "God," said he, "will feed his own poor ; do thou give what thou hast." The Deacon to be prudent gave away two pieces, and secretly reserved one. As they advanced in the direction of the river Po, they were overtaken by some men on horseback, who dismounting and falling on their knees, informed him that their master Leporius, a man in high authority,<sup>1</sup> who lived not far off, was ill with all his family of a fever ; they entreated him to repair thither, or if this were impossible, to pray for Leporius at a distance. But German consented to go out of his way, and came to the residence of the nobleman, notwithstanding the objections urged by his attendants. The men who had desired his aid, immediately offered the present of two hundred pieces of gold which had been sent by them. Then he turned to the Deacon and said : "Take this offering, and consider that thou hast defrauded God's own poor ; for if thou hadst given to the beggars the three pieces as I charged thee,

<sup>1</sup> Vir spectabilis.

we should now have received three hundred pieces instead of two hundred." His companion blushed to think his secret actions should thus have been disclosed.

They then hastened to Leporius, who was highly pleased to see German. Upon entering, the latter fell down in prayer, and forthwith healed the nobleman and all his family. Then he visited the cottages in the neighbourhood where the epidemic raged, and cured every one. This miracle took place not far from Milan, at the village of Niguarda,<sup>1</sup> where a Church dedicated to St. German is said still to bear witness to his visit. This had necessarily caused considerable delay, and it was not before the third day that he was able to set out again, accompanied a short way by Leporius himself.

In the mean time, fame had given notice of his progress at Ravenna, where he was expected with great anxiety. Like Sidonius Apollinaris, on a similar expedition, nineteen years after, he would descend into the plains of the Po, following, however, the course of the yellow Lambro, instead of the Tessin, to Placentia, a town he was afterwards to revisit under very different circumstances. Then embarking on the post-barges of the Po,<sup>2</sup> he would pass by the conflux of the blue Adda, the swift Adige, the sluggish Mincio, which take their sources in the Ligurian and Euganean mountains ; his eyes would be refreshed by the shades of the groves of oaks and maple trees which crown their

<sup>1</sup> Bosch. not ad locum Const.

<sup>2</sup> "Cursoriam sic navigio nomen." Sid. Apoll. Ep. v. lib. i. "Celoces et holcadas, quibus excursum per alveum Padi faciebant." Cassiodorus apud Notas in Sid. Apoll. Sirmond.

banks, where the sweet concert of birds issued at the same time from the rushes and reeds of their bed, and the thickets and bushes which so closely line the way. He would, like Sidonius, pass under the walls of Cremona, and perhaps remember Virgil's verses ; then behold at a little distance, the scene of Otho's single act of heroism, the memorable town of Brixillum, and at last arrive by one of the many mouths of the Po, in sight of Ravenna.

Ravenna, we are told, was not originally a Roman colony, but a municipal town,<sup>1</sup> to which the Romans granted the right of governing itself by its own laws, the privilege of having the same offices and dignities as the Roman people, and exemption from all kind of tribute. Here was the residence of the Prætor. The assemblies of the provinces were held in it, and a large fleet filled the fine harbour. Of late, the Roman Emperors had been much attached to this town, which always remained faithful. Honorius and Valentinian III. had fixed their abode here, and built palaces. In subsequent times, Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, made it the centre of his new kingdom ; and till the middle of the eighth century, Ravenna was considered the capital of Italy and the seat of government. The palace and sepulchre of Theodoric may still be seen.<sup>2</sup> "At Ravenna," says Sidonius,<sup>3</sup> "you might be perplexed to know whether the great imperial street which traverses it, connects or separates the old city from the new harbour. Two branches of the Po circulate through the town and divide it. This river, which

<sup>1</sup> See Not. in Sid. Ap. ed. Lyons, 1836.

<sup>2</sup> Gibbon, tom. iv. p. 28. Knight's Eccles. Architect.

<sup>3</sup> Sid. Apoll. Epist. 5. b. i.

was drawn off from the principal stream by artificial means, has been divided into various channels, which flow round the walls of the city and defend it from external attack, and again penetrate into the interior, for the advantage of commerce. Every thing here is in favour of traffic ; provisions are in abundance. Yet when the salt waters of the sea enter by the flood-gates on one side, and on the other the miry waters of the canals are agitated by the many boats which pass to and fro, and the mud is dug up by the poles of the sailors who steer their way : even in the middle of water we were thirsty ; in truth, nowhere is the aqueduct itself quite limpid, nor the cistern without impurities ; much less is there a fresh source or a clean well." This, of course, is in some measure a partial description of the majestic Ravenna ; and a more complete idea may be obtained from Gibbon ;<sup>1</sup> yet it well represents the great feature of the place, intersected as it was with canals, and surrounded by extensive marshes and the sea.

German had managed to arrive there by night, to avoid publicity ; yet the people were on the look-out for him, and he did not enter unobserved. The chief men of the town came out to meet him, with numbers of all rank and age. Among these was St. Peter, Archbishop of Ravenna, surnamed Chrysologus, from his eloquence, and well known in the Church. Of him it is that the following interesting anecdote has been preserved in the Breviary Service for his Festival, the 4th of December. "In his sermons addressed to the people, his language was often so energetic, that the vehemence of his exertions sometimes caused his voice to fail all at once. This hap-

<sup>1</sup> Tom. iv. p. 27.



pened on the occasion of his Discourse upon the Woman that had the issue of blood. The inhabitants of Ravenna, seeing the impediment which had suddenly come upon him, moved with sympathy, filled the place with such earnest lamentations and prayers to God, that afterwards he returned thanks to God that the injury which his voice and discourse had received had been turned to such a demonstration of love." The Roman Breviary has besides, several Lessons, taken from his writings, for the Festivals of other Saints, as many are aware. Of him it was also said, that he literally governed his Church according to the Apostolic precepts.<sup>1</sup> His life in the Episcopate was similar to that which he had led before his elevation ; for he had been a monk. He was, moreover, in high favour with the Emperor and Empress. Six other Bishops were likewise in the suite of German, but their names are not given. It would require no great stretch of imagination to seek for the great St. Leo the Pope among them. He was a personal friend of St. Peter Chrysologus, and much in request at the Court of Ravenna, which he had often served in emergencies. But as Constantius is silent, it is more probable they were suffragan Bishops of St. Peter,<sup>2</sup> one of whom might be Cornelius, Bishop of Imola, an intimate friend of Chrysologus, to whose elevation he had been instrumental.<sup>3</sup>

As soon as German was known to have arrived, the Empress Placidia sent a valuable vessel of silver to

<sup>1</sup> Constantius § 70. Bolland. Tillemont, tom. xv. Ughellus, tom. ii. p. 332.

<sup>2</sup> There were ten Suffragans of Ravenna.

<sup>3</sup> See Ughellus, tom. ii. p. 332. ed. 1647.

him, filled with delicate provisions, without any mixture of flesh. Having accepted the present, he delivered the contents to his followers and his clerical attendants, and begged leave to sell the silver vessel for the sake of the poor. As a return to the Empress, he sent her a little wooden dish, containing some barley bread. Placidia was greatly pleased with the action of German, and received with deep reverence the humble platter and food of the Saint. Afterwards, she caused the wooden dish to be chased in gold, and preserved the bread, which became afterwards the means of many miraculous cures.<sup>1</sup>

Galla Placidia was mother of the Emperor Valentinian III., and sister of the late Emperor Honorius. Three females were at this time at the head of the government in the Western and Eastern Empires. Pulcheria and Eudocia, the sister and wife of the young Theodosius, reigned supreme at Constantinople. Placidia, taught by a life of adventures and troubles, directed the affairs of the West. Her son, Valentinian, had been on the throne since 425, that is, twenty-three years. Grandson of the Great Theodosius, he did not prove that the talent which misses one generation returns in the next. "His long minority," says Gibbon, "was entrusted to the guardian care of a mother, who might assert a female claim to the succession of the Western Empire—Placidia; but she could not equal the reputation and virtues of the wife and sister of Theodosius (the younger), the elegant genius of Eudocia, the wise and successful policy of Pulcheria. The mother of Valentinian was jealous of the power which she was incapable of exercising; she reigned twenty-five years in the name of her son; and the character of that un-

<sup>1</sup> So Tillemont renders the passage. Art. de St. Germain.

worthy Emperor gradually countenanced the suspicion that Placidia had enervated his youth by a dissolute education, and studiously diverted his attention from every manly and honourable pursuit." This portrait is here given, chiefly as indicating a subject for candid enquiry, should a mind more congenial to Christian and Catholic development than that of Gibbon, be turned to the study of the ambiguous characters of Placidia and Valentinian. Constantius, whose friend, Sidonius Apollinaris, was acquainted with the Court of Ravenna as well as any of his age, positively affirms that Placidia and Valentinian were both zealous for the Catholic faith, and though so high in the world, were ever known to lower themselves for the honour of God's servants. On the occasion we are now interested in, it is certain they were foremost in showing the greatest respect to German ; nor could it be said that Ambrose, when suing for a guilty province at the Court of Theodosius the Great, had met with more deference and considerateness than now was evinced by the grand-son of that prince to the advocate of the Armoricans.

Some short time, it appears, elapsed before he found a favourable opportunity of laying the cause of this people before Valentinian. One day as he was walking in one of the broadest streets surrounded by a number of persons, he passed by the gates of the prison, then filled with many who had been doomed to die or suffer some severe penalty. Hearing that German was passing by, they all at once raised a loud cry. He enquired the cause, and called for the door-keepers, who had concealed themselves, and learnt from them that the dissensions of the contending factions at court had occasioned a recent importation of these unhappy victims into the state prisons.

Those who are acquainted with the history of this period, will be able to understand how many acts of tyranny were then executed in the imperial name, though in fact they emanated from subordinate ministers and officers. When German saw that it was useless to seek for mercy elsewhere, he had recourse to that Divine aid which had so often been present with him. He advanced towards the prison and fell down in prayer. It was not long before its efficacy was manifested. The bars and bolts of the gates were suddenly loosened, and a number of prisoners came forth with their chains unfastened, which they held up to the view of the multitude. Prisons are made for the lawless, and for the protection of justice and peace ; in this case, says Constantius, law seemed to be justified in the violation of its securities. The released men then, together with German and the whole multitude, proceeded to the Church to return thanks.

The fame of his miracles daily spread ; people came from all sides. The sick and infirm were healed. It seemed that the gift of Christ obtained more virtue as German was drawing to the close of his life. The seven Bishops before mentioned, among whom was St. Peter Chrysologus, hardly ever left his side. They were alike filled with astonishment at the incessant mortifications he practised, and the wonderful miracles he performed. And their testimony, which is of the highest character, as Constantius expressly declares, is corroborative of the evidence for his miracles which are proved from so many other sources.<sup>1</sup>

There was a man about the court who acted as chief secretary to the Patrician Segisvultus.<sup>2</sup> He had a son

<sup>1</sup> "Hi testes operum illius multis temporibus fuere."

<sup>2</sup> "Qui tum patritii Segisvulti cancellis præerat."

that was dying of a low fever. The physicians had given him over, and his parents were in the utmost affliction. At last they bethought themselves of seeking help from the Bishop of Auxerre. Their son could scarcely be said to live. They came with their relations and friends and humbly implored his assistance. The Bishops, his companions, joined in the request. He then hastened to visit the dying youth. While they were going, a messenger came to say that the son of Volusianus (for so the Secretary was called) was dead, and that there was no longer any need of troubling the holy man. The other Bishops, however, would not let him stop, but earnestly bid him perfect the work of mercy. They found the body lifeless ; the heat of nature had gone, the corpse was cold as stone. They then offered up a prayer for the rest of his soul,<sup>1</sup> and were on the point of returning, when the by-standers began to weep and bewail bitterly. The Bishops then entreated him to pray the Lord in behalf of the bereaved parents, for the restoration of the youth. He hesitated long ; if we except the uncertain miracle performed in the company of St. Anian, near Orleans, this was the first call upon his power for raising a dead man. Such a deed had scarcely been known in ecclesiastical history. However, we are told, his feelings of compassion and charity, combined with that confidence which so long a life of faith produced, urged him to make the trial. He removed the crowd, as when his Master had raised the daughter of Jairus ; then like Elijah and Elisha, he knelt down over the corpse. His tears fell in abundance, and he called instantly upon the name of Christ. In the meantime, the dead youth began to move, and by degrees the limbs recovered

<sup>1</sup> *Depositaque pro animæ requie oratione.*"

their animation. The eyes sought the light, the fingers began to bend, the tongue to falter. Then German arose from prayer, and raised up the youth, who like Lazarus might be said "to have slept but not unto death." He sat up, drew his breath, stretched himself, looked around. At last his whole strength returned. Great was the joy of his parents, loud were the acclamations of the people. The end of German was near at hand ; this miracle was a kind of type of the glory which was soon to be given to him.

There was yet another about the court who had reason to be grateful to him. This was a pupil of the Eunuch Acholius<sup>1</sup> who held the chief office of Chamberlain. He had brought up the young man with great care, and imbued him with a love for letters. An evil spirit however crushed his energies ; every month at the moon's full, he was seized with what is called the falling sickness, of which there is frequent mention in ancient history.<sup>2</sup> Cæsar, according to Plutarch, was subject to it ; and there have been some who thought St. Paul was liable to it.<sup>3</sup> All the authority of the imperial household was used to obtain German's help. Accordingly when he had examined the young man, contrary to his practice, (for he was wont to expel the most furious spirits by simple imposition of hands), he deferred purifying him to another day. The malign influence had made the unfortunate young man a very receptacle, as it were, of Satan's operations. German desired he might be left

<sup>1</sup> Or Scolius. Bodl. MS. In this MS. here follows a story referred by Bosch. to Hericus's Works. It is also found in the Codex Chifflet., but in a different place. It is here omitted as unimportant and uncertain.

<sup>2</sup> " Caduca allisione prosternit."

<sup>3</sup> Bishop Bull. Serm.

alone with him for the night. In the same night the evil spirit came out of him, wallowing and confessing that it had dwelt in him since his earliest years. The young man thus restored to health, soon returned to his station in the palace.

The time was come when he deemed it seasonable to explain the object of his journey. His negotiations with the Emperor and Empress proved successful; and he might have carried home their pardon to the Armoricans, with terms of peace. But while he was interceding for them, the news came that this restless people had again revolted. The efforts he had made were thus rendered void. And the Emperor was greatly irritated at their conduct. A learned and ingenious writer,<sup>1</sup> whose chronological views alone need here be suspected, conjectures with great probability, that the reasons which might induce the Armoricans to thwart the negotiations of their deputy, were such as the following. Aetius, the Patrician, their great enemy and dread, was at this time embarrassed with his war against the Franks, who, under their king Clodion, were then making an invasion into the north of Gaul, where they had taken possession of Cambray and Tournay. Secondly, the extreme misery of all who lived within the Roman dominion, except the nobles and chief men, and the continual reinforcements which daily desertions brought to the Armorican confederacy, would at the same time raise their expectations of success in rebellion, and make them still more averse to further connexion with the Empire. Moreover it appears there was a very general feeling abroad that the duration of the Roman power, as foretold by the

<sup>1</sup> L'Abbé Dubos *Etablissement de la Monarchie Française.* tom. i. p. 393.

ancient pagan oracles, was now about to expire. Lastly, the officers and auxiliaries appear to have taken an unfair advantage of the suspension of arms, in order to form underhand a party within the Armorican republic, with a view to an easier conquest hereafter. Whether Eochar, with that inconsistency which is so frequent after sudden revivals of conscience, and that natural tendency of a Barbarian to gratify whatever impression was uppermost, violated his sacred engagements with German and gave fresh alarm to the Armoricans, we are not strictly informed. It might seem indeed that this latter people trifled with the character of their ambassador. But the case requires consideration. The pardon and favour of the Court of Ravenna, though the most easily obtained, was not after all the main point to be gained. When there are many degrees of authority, it is the nearest to themselves which men are most interested in conciliating. As long as Aetius and the Alani remained in their neighbourhood, the Armoricans would ever have to fear. It was also an impolitic measure, though the only one practicable, to apply to the Court of Ravenna, instead of Aetius. However, the revolt of the nation was soon after followed by a severe chastisement at the hands of their enemies.<sup>1</sup> Still up to the great invasion of the Huns in 451, the Armoricans had not been entirely subdued, and continued to give no little anxiety to the vigilant Patrician. But when this scourge of God threatened Gaul, political animosities were laid aside, and all the inhabitants of the country united against Attila and his forces.<sup>2</sup> And now to return.

<sup>1</sup> Constantius.

<sup>2</sup> Dubos, tom. i. p. 439-441.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

*His Death.*

ONE morning after the celebration of mass (the expression belongs to the original), St. German was discoursing upon subjects of religion with the Bishops that waited on him. In the middle of the conversation he said to them : " I commend to you, beloved brethren, my death. Methought, during the sleep of the night, I received from our Lord the provisions for a journey ; and when I asked the cause of this journey, ' Fear not, he said, I send thee to thy proper country, to no foreign land ; there thou shalt have eternal rest and peace.' " The Bishops then endeavoured to interpret the dream otherwise ; but he continued to refer it to his death ; " I well know what that country is which God promises to his servants." His foresight was not at fault. A few days after, on the 25th of July, 448, A. D., he was taken seriously ill. When he grew no better but ever worse, the whole city was moved. It was clear death was now approaching with rapid strides, as if to spare him, who had died for thirty years to the world, the sufferings of a protracted departure. Among the numbers who came to pay their last respects to him while alive, was the Empress Placidia. Putting aside the grandeur of her rank, she hastened to visit his bedside. She then promised to grant whatever he should ask. Upon one thing he laid great stress : his body was to be restored to his native country ; nor was it a request which Placidia was inclined to accept. He was not however re-

fused. In the meantime multitudes came to visit the dying Saint by night and by day. During the seven days of his sickness, there was a choir at his bedside singing Psalms. On the seventh day, says Constantius, the 31st of July, the happy and blessed soul of German was carried up to heaven.<sup>1</sup> He had been Bishop thirty years and twenty-five days.

His inheritance was then divided. The chief claimants were the Emperor and the Empress, his mother, and the Bishops. His relics were esteemed worth all other riches, and each one endeavoured out of the little the Saint had to leave, to obtain something. Placidia got the little box which enclosed the relics of the Apostles and Martyrs which German wore at his breast, and with which he had performed miracles. St. Peter Chrysologus took for himself the monk's hood,<sup>2</sup> with the hair cloth which touched his skin.<sup>3</sup> The other Bishops, in order to obtain some small legacy, were content to tear the garments which remained; one took the over-coat,<sup>4</sup> another the belt; two divided the tunic, two others the coarse cloth<sup>5</sup> on which he lay.

The magnificence of the funeral procession displayed the zeal of the court and city. All came forward to contribute. Acholius, the Eunuch of the royal chamber, whose pupil had been healed by German, presented costly spices to embalm his body. The Empress Placidia, covered it with a rich dress, with the Eagle and the imperial arms designed upon it, in which silk, a very precious material at that time, was combined with fine

<sup>1</sup> See ult. § Const. Bodl. M.S. and Bolland. Robert. Monach. Chron. Ed. 1609, Trevis.

<sup>2</sup> Cuculla.

<sup>3</sup> Cum interiori cilicio.

<sup>4</sup> Pallium, not the pall apparently, as he was not Metropolitan.

<sup>5</sup> Sagulum vid. *suprà*, p. 54. Not.

embroidery ;<sup>1</sup> and had it placed in a coffin of cypress wood ; both which were long after preserved at Auxerre, and seen by Hericus. The Emperor paid the expenses of the Translation to Gaul, and conferred a magnificent largess upon the clerical and lay attendants of the departed Saint. The ceremonies in use for the translation of a corpse, were then performed by the Bishops who had been with him in his last hours. At the head of these was the Archbishop of Ravenna, St. Peter Chrysologus. The Church has subjects of glory and exultation which seem singular to the world. Among them is the honour of burying Saints and attending their last hours. "To St. Peter, says the Breviary, the honour was granted of burying two Saints who died at Ravenna, Barbatian the Presbyter, and German Bishop of Auxerre, whose bodies he embalmed with costly ointments." After the preparations were concluded, messengers were sent before the funeral procession to prepare the due solemnities wherever he should pass.<sup>2</sup>

The procession then set off. Its splendour and pomp were almost unequalled. A vast concourse of people followed. It arrived at Placentia by night. The coffin was deposited in the Cathedral, and a vigil instituted, during which religious offices were performed. Then a woman, an inhabitant of Placentia, who had a palsy, and had lost the use of her limbs, requested the permission to lie under the coffin ; and in this position she remained till the return of day. Early the coffin was taken up, and the woman rose. She had recovered the soundness of her body, and to the amazement of all,

<sup>1</sup> Constantius et Hericus de Miraculis. Bosch. Comm.

<sup>2</sup> This phrase of Const. is thus explained by Hericus de Mir.  
§ 27.

walked on with the rest of the people who followed the funeral march.

St. German, when he before passed through Vercelli, had given a promise to the Bishop of that town, probably St. Albinus, that he would on his return from Ravenna dedicate a new Church. When, therefore, says Hericus, the Bishop heard of his death, he proceeded to consecrate it himself. According to custom, he gave orders that the candles should be lighted. But it was in vain ; the candles could not be lighted, the servants tried repeatedly without effect. This lasted for several days, and the Bishop was finally forced to desist. In the meantime, news arrived that the procession was approaching. St. Albinus went out to meet it, and brought the coffin into the new Church. Scarcely had it entered, when the whole Church in an instant lighted up. The Bishop perceived the signal for the dedication was now given, and he performed it. The name of this Church we are told is at present St. Eusebius.

And now the procession moved on again. The natives of Gaul having heard of German's decease, flocked to meet the body of him, whom they considered a patron Saint of their land.<sup>1</sup> At the passage of the Alps, a large multitude were ready to escort him into Gaul.<sup>2</sup> Each one pressed forward to have the honour of bearing the coffin ; and thus it was borne along by successive carriers ; while the rest filled the air with hymns and exclamations of thanksgiving. The way was covered with memorials which attested the progress of the body. The ardour of the people facilitated the passage of the Alps.<sup>3</sup> Some were busied in levelling the roads, others filled the precipices, and restored the decayed bridges.

<sup>1</sup> Const. § 76.

<sup>2</sup> Hericus, 31, 32.

<sup>3</sup> Const.

Many brought offerings of money to defray the expenses. A great number of lights shone in the procession both by day and by night, challenging even the rays of the sun with their brightness.<sup>1</sup> Among those who came to meet the corpse, was one Saturnus, a presbyter and disciple of German. He was noted for his sanctity, and lived in terms of great intimacy with his master. By his order he had remained at Auxerre, while German repaired to Ravenna. On the day in which the latter died, an angel is said to have revealed his decease to Saturnus. Upon which he imparted the sad intelligence to the inhabitants of Auxerre, who accompanied in great numbers to the foot of the Alps. An ancient inscription on marble, preserved at Auxerre in the time of Hericus, bore witness to this fact.

But perhaps the most touching circumstance of the procession was the following. It will have been remarked that the corpse advanced but slowly, as it was borne on men's shoulders, and consequently, a multitude of ardent persons were enabled to accompany from every town the escort for some distance. But the names of five females have been preserved, who followed on foot the body, the whole way from Ravenna. They were all virgins, and some, if not all, sisters. They were called, St. Magnentia, St. Palladia, St. Camilla, St. Maxima, St. Porcaria.<sup>2</sup> The three first died, one after the other, before they reached the term of their pilgrimage. A solemn burial was performed for them, at the high-road side, and Churches soon after were erected over their remains, and dedicated to them, where many miracles were performed. The two others endured the fatigue, and arrived at Auxerre, to see

<sup>1</sup> Constantius.

<sup>2</sup> Hericus de Mir. § 33.

the body of German interred. St. Maxima, one of these, was subsequently buried near the Church at Auxerre, where German lay. The remains of St. Porcaria, the other, were deposited nine miles from the town, and were famous for the miraculous cures which there took place. Till very late, we learn there was an ancient tomb existing,<sup>1</sup> in which the body of St. Magnentia, one of those who died on the road, had been laid, and upon which there was the representation of this holy virgin, dying in a bed surrounded by other virgins. And a monument which existed in 1567, in the monastery of St. German, according to the official statement of the then Bishop of Auxerre, bore this inscription, "Here lies the body of the Lady St. Maxima, Virgin, who accompanied the body of St. German from Ravenna to this monastery, together with St. Palladia, St. Magnentia, St. Camilla, and St. Porcaria." From which, it appears these holy virgins were persons of rank.

At last the body arrived at Auxerre. Fifty-three days, says Hericus,<sup>2</sup> had elapsed since German died at Ravenna. On the 22nd of September, the procession entered the Church of St. Stephen, accompanied by the whole population of the town. Here was the episcopal throne. During ten successive days, the corpse there lay exposed; religious offices were continued all the while. When all the rites preparatory to inhuming were completed, the coffin was committed to the sepulchre, on the 1st of October, 448, A. D., in the presence of a multitude of strangers, as well as inhabitants of Auxerre, among whom, says Hericus, there were many Bishops and Priests from distant provinces;—perhaps St. Lupus, St. Hilary, St. Seve-

<sup>1</sup> Bosch. Not. apud Bolland.

<sup>2</sup> § 34, § 37.

rus, St. Anian, St. Eucher—the friends of the departed Saint. The place of the burial was not the Church of St. Stephen, where the Exposition had taken place, but an oratory or chapel, in one of those estates which he had given up to the Church when he parted with his patrimony and other possessions. This chapel was dedicated to St. Maurice, and German had appointed the Presbyter Saturnus, the same who came out to meet the procession, to perform the ecclesiastical duties in it. This place, says Constantius, ever showed, by the miracles which were henceforth manifested there, that German in glory was still alive with his Church.

The 1st of October, the day of his Deposition, seems to have been, in primitive times, the principal Festival of the Saint,<sup>1</sup> especially in Gaul and Britain. The 31st of July<sup>2</sup> was next, if not quite equal, in the honour with which it was observed, and, in process of time, it has come to supersede the former, except at Auxerre, where these two Festivals, with four others in the course of the year, are still kept with great solemnities.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

### *His Canonization.*

THE history of St. German *alive*, is thus resumed in four verses of Bede's Ephemeris, or Calendar :—<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Martyrol. Antissiod. 1751.    <sup>2</sup> See Bede Martyrol. & Calend.

<sup>3</sup> Calend. Octob.

Germanusque simul doctrina insignis et actu,  
 Tum propriam munît meritis Antissiodorum,  
 Qui Oceano fidei refugas et dogma nefandum  
 Reppulit, et signis te picta Britannia texit.

For deeds and doctrine German far renowned,  
 Auxerre, his native city, raised on high,  
 The Ocean crossed, to probe the faith unsound ;  
 Then stemming proud Pelagius' impious lie,  
 Anon the verdant plains of Britain fair,  
 He covered o'er with signs and wonders rare.

The history of St. German *dead*, that is, of the effects which were owing to his presence in the spirit, among the flock he had tended alive, would embrace a period of at least twelve centuries. Among the early testimonies which redound to his honour, that of the great Apostle of the Franks, St. Remy, must not be omitted.<sup>1</sup> About a century after, it is said, from the great veneration which he had for German of Auxerre, he erected a Church in tribute to him, where he destined his own remains to be deposited ; and it became famous for the miracles there performed.

But still more honourable to our Saint, whose rank in the sacred Calendar is that of Confessor and Bishop, (Pontificis) is the very ancient office called the Mass of St. German, which Cardinal Bona has published from an old manuscript, and which used to be celebrated, not long after German's death, annually, on his Festival in Gaul. The uniformity of the Canon had, as yet, not been everywhere enforced, and Churches seem to have had the privilege of either adopting uses of their own, or of inserting sections and prayers into the

<sup>1</sup> Martyr. Antiss. sub nom. Remigii.



most received form of Mass.<sup>1</sup> The following document seems to be a specimen of the latter :—<sup>2</sup>

## MASS OF ST. GERMAN.

## PREFACE.

Dearly beloved brethren, let us celebrate with ready devotion this august and sacred day, imploring humbly the mercy of our Lord, that we who cannot indeed equal the deeds, may be enabled, at least, to follow the footsteps and imitate the Faith of the blessed Bishop and Confessor German, whose example we admire.

## COLLECT.

We give Thee thanks, Almighty God, for the wonderful gifts (*virtutibus*) of the blessed German, Thy Bishop, which Thou, Almighty Father, didst justly grant unto him, because he loved Thee, in his Apostolical profession, more than all things. He cast away riches from him, that by poverty of spirit he might ascend into the kingdom of heaven. He observed meekness, that he might through the spirit inherit the earth in the flesh. He was pleased to mourn in this world that he might enjoy heavenly

## MISSA ST. GERMANI.

## PRÆFATIO.

Venerabilem diem atque sublimem, Fratres Carissimi, prompta devotione celebremus, misericordiam Domini nostri suppliciter exorantes, ut Beatissimi Germani Antistitis et Confessoris sui, cujus exempla miramur, etsi æquari factis ejus non possumus, saltem vestigia sequi, et fidem nobis contingat imitari.

## COLLECTIO.

Gratias tibi agimus Omnipotens Deus pro virtutibus Beatissimi Germani Antistitis tui, quas ei Pater omnipotens non immerito tribuisti, quia te Apostolica confessione rebus omnibus plus amavit; discussit a se divitias, ut paupertate spiritus cœlorum regna conscenderet: mansuetudinem tenuit, ut terram sui corporis spiritualiter possideret. Neque delectatus est in sæculo, ut cœlestem consolationem ex muneris tui largitate perciperet: justitiam esurivit atque sitivit, ut tuis saturaretur elo-

<sup>1</sup> Card. Bona. De Rebus Lit. 93. Ed. 4to.

<sup>2</sup> The Titles are part of the document.

consolation, from the abundance of Thy bounty. He hungered and thirsted after righteousness, that he might be filled with Thy word; he was ever merciful (or he ever gave alms to the poor *eleemosynam jugiter fecit*) that he might continually obtain Thy mercy, not only for himself, but for others also. Purity of heart he cultivated, that he might see Thee. He preserved the Faith, that he might be united with Thy children in brotherly communion. By whose intercession we pray.

(*Here two lines are erased.*)

#### AFTER THE NAMES.

Having heard the names of those who make their oblations, let us implore the long-suffering clemency of God, that these oblations of his people, which we offer up in honour of the Blessed Bishop and Confessor German.....(*something here wanting*) Let us celebrate this solemn and high day, with the unshaken liberty of that Faith which he defended with constant purpose, in order that the strength of his patience.....(*Here also two lines are erased.*)

Let us also pray for the spirits of those that are dear to us, the number and names of whom the same Almighty God

quiiis : eleemosynam jugiter fecit, ut indesinenter non tantum sibi, sed et cæteris pietatis tuæ misericordiam obtineret : puritatem cordis habuit, ut te videret : fidem servavit, ut filiis tuis fraterna se participatione conjungeret. Per cujus interventum precamur.....

(*Desunt hic duæ lineæ abrasæ.*)

#### POST NOMINA.

Auditis nominibus offerentium, indeficientem divinam clementiam deprecemur, ut has oblationes plebis, quas in honorem Beatissimi Germani Antistitis et Confessoris offerimus.....(*deest aliquid*) Signatum diem hodiernæ solemnitatis celebremus cum inconcussâ fidei libertate, quam ille constanti mente defendit, ut robur patientiæ ejus.....

(*Desunt hic etiam duæ lineæ abrasæ.*)

Oremus etiam et pro spiritibus carorum nostrorum, quorum idem Omnipotens Deus et numerum novit et nomina, ut

knoweth, that he may be mindful of all, and remit the sins of all. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

omnium memoriam faciat, omnium peccata dimittat. Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum.

#### COLLECT AT THE SALUTATION OF PEACE, PAX VOBISCUM.<sup>1</sup>

God, for whose sacred name, Thy blessed Bishop, German, desired to endure persecution for righteousness's sake, inasmuch, that, though he did not suffer martyrdom, he yet reached forward to it by faith, and feared not to subject himself to the hatred and slanders of men, so as he might obtain an abundant reward in heaven, and attain unto those great blessings of the Gospel; we pray Thee, by his intercession, to grant that peace to Thy Church henceforth for ever, which he loved on earth, according to Thy command. Through our Lord.

#### PREFACE TO THE CANON OF THE MASS.<sup>2</sup>

It is meet and right; it is very meet and right that we should give thanks unto Thee, and sing praises to Thy Fa-

#### COLLECTIO AD PACEM.

Deus, pro cujus sacro nomine Beatus Germanus Antistes tuus desideravit persecutionem pati propter justitiam, ut etsi martyrium non perferret, fide tamen pertenderet: nec timeret odiis hominum et maledictionibus subjacere, dummodo mercedem copiosum consequeretur in cœlo, et ad illas beatitudes Evangelicas perveniret; te per hujus interventum precamur, ut pacem quam te jubente dilexit in sæculo, perpetualiter Ecclesiæ possidendam tribuas in futuro. Per Dominum nostrum.

#### CONTESTATIO MISSÆ.

Dignum et justum est: verè æquum et justum est nos tibi gratias agere, et pietati tuæ in honorem summi sacerdotis tui

<sup>1</sup> See Ducange ad Voc. Osculum. See also Bingham, xlii. 8. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Contestatio, idem sonat quod Contestada; ita enim appellari *Præfationem*, seu Orationem quæ Canoni præmittitur, quæ disponitur Sacerdos et populus ad tremendorum mysteriorum confectionem, quod, ut est in Codice Thuano "Contestetur Sacerdos fidam ac veram professionem populi, id est gratias referre Deo dignum esse."

Canon Missæ, Oratio, quæ in Missa ante Consecrationem, et in ipsâ consecratione divinæ hostiæ recitatur à sacerdote, quæ ideo Canon vocatur, "quia in ea est legitima et regularis sacramentorum Confectio."

therly kindness (*pietati tuæ*) in honour of Thy glorious Priest German, both Bishop and Confessor, and that we should offer up our petitions, and recount his great gifts, which Thou, O Lord, Father Almighty, justly didst grant unto him, because in his Apostolical profession he loved Thee more than all things, &c. (*The words are repeated from the first Collect, then is added.*) He loved Thee, O Lord, with all his heart, and with all his mind, and with all his soul, and he loved his neighbour as himself; that, as the whole law and the prophets hang upon these two precepts, he might attain unto those blessings of the Gospel which we have recounted. And whereas Thou, O Lord Jesus Christ, hast said unto thy Apostles, to go all over the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature, and work miracles, these things Thy devoted servant Bishop German<sup>1</sup> ...following their footsteps, through all Gaul, at Rome (Ravenna?), in Italy, and in Britain; and being afflicted in the body for thirty years...continually preached in Thy name extirpated heresies, brought round the people to a full and perfect faith, cast out

Germani Episcopi et Confessoris laudes canere, vota persolvere, ejusque enarrare virtutes, quas ei Domine Pater Omnipotens non immerito tribuisti, quia te Apostolica confessione rebus omnibus plus amavit, &c. (*Repetit ea quæ habentur suprâ in prima Collecta, tum subdit.*) Dilexit te Domine ex toto corde, et ex totâ mente, et ex totâ anima sua, et proximum suum tamquam seipsum; ut secundum quod in his duobus mandatis universa lex et Prophetæ pendebant, ad eas quas diximus evangelicas beatitudines perveniret. Et quia tu Domine Jesu Christi Apostolis tuis dixeras, ut euntes per universum mundum universæ creaturæ evangelium predicarent, et virtutes efficerent, hæc tuus devotissimus Germanus Episcopus.....eorum vestigia subsecutus per totas Gallias, Romæ, in Italia, in Britannia annis triginta corpore afflictus.....jugiter in tuo nomine prædicavit, hæreses abstulit, adduxit populum ad plenam et integram fidem, ejecit demones, mortuos suscitavit, ægris reddidit pristinam sanitatem, implevitque omnia sig-

<sup>1</sup> Supply "hath accomplished," the MS. being here erased.

devils, raised the dead, restored to the sick their former health, and having obtained this great power, performed every other sign. He began and advanced. He fought and conquered. He fulfilled his course, and passed by the darkness of death, to join the company of martyrs, having brought forth fruit an hundred-fold, and having, after this life ended, gone to dwell in the kingdom of heaven. In this belief, O God, the Father Almighty, we beseech Thee humbly, that being commended to Thy Fatherly kindness by his patronage and intercessions in Thy presence, we may obtain in all things Thy mercy, praising Thee, and saying, in the words of Angelic praise, Holy, holy, holy.

na, virtutes utique adeptus. Sic cœpit ut cresceret. Sic pugnavit ut vinceret. Sic consummavit, ut mortis tenebras præteriret, Martyriis se conjungeret stola, cum centesimum fructum perceperit, et vita hac peracta regnum inhabitaret æternum. Quod credentes Deus Pater Omnipotens supplices exoramus, ut in ejus apud te patrociniis et intercessionibus pietati tue commendati nos in omnibus tuam misericordiam consequamur, Angelica te exultatione laudantes et dicentes. Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus.

#### COLLECT AFTER THE SANCTUS.

Blessed truly be He that cometh in the name of the Lord, Blessed be God, the king of Israel; peace on earth, and glory in the highest. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who the day before He suffered.....

#### COLLECTIO POST SANCTUS.

Benedictus planè qui venit in nomine Domini, benedictus Deus, Rex Israel, pax in terra, gloria in excelsis. Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum filium tuum, qui pridie quam pateretur.....

#### AFTER THE CONSECRATION.

Let Thy holy Word descend, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, upon these our oblations :

#### POST SECRETA.

Descendat, precamur Omnipotens Deus, super hæc quæ tibi offerimus, Verbum

Let the Spirit of Thy inestimable glory descend : Let the gift of Thy ancient long-suffering descend,<sup>1</sup> that our oblation may become an acceptable and spiritual sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour. May Thy mighty right hand also defend Thy servants, through the blood of Christ.

tuum sanctum : descendat inæstimabilis gloriæ tuæ Spiritus : descendat antiquæ indulgentiæ tuæ donum, ut fiat oblatio nostra hostia spiritualis in odorem suavitatis accepta. Etiam nos famulos tuos per sanguinem Christi tua manus dextera invicta custodiat.

**BEFORE THE LORD'S PRAYER. ANTE ORATIONEM DOMINICAM.**

Acknowledge, O Lord, the words which Thou hast taught, pardon that presumption which Thou hast commanded : It is ignorance not to know our deserts, it is contumacy not to keep the command, whereby we are enjoined to say, Our Father, &c.

Agnosce Domine verba quæ præcepisti, ignosce præsumptioni quam imperasti : ignorantia est non nosse meritum, contumacia est non servare mandatum, quo dicere jubemur, Pater noster, &c.

**AFTER THE PRAYER.**

Deliver us from all evil, O God, the Author of all good things, from all temptation, from all offence, from all work of darkness, and establish us in all good, and give peace in our days, O Author of peace and charity. Through our Lord.

*(The Blessing of the people is wanting.)*

**POST ORATIONEM.**

Libera nos a malis omnibus, auctor bonorum Deus, ab omni tentatione, ab omni scandalo, ab omni opere tenebrarum, et constitue nos in omni bono, et da pacem in diebus nostris, auctor pacis et charitatis. Per Dominum nostrum.

*(Benedictio populi deest.)*

**COLLECT AFTER THE  
EUCCHARIST.**

We have taken from the sacred altar the body and blood of

**COLLECTIO POST  
EUCCHARISTIAM.**

Sumpsimus ex sacris altarisibus Christi Domini ac Dei

<sup>1</sup> Bona takes occasion here to observe, that this invocation after the Consecration, contains nothing inconsistent with the Faith.

Christ, our Lord and our God... believing in the unity of the Blessed Trinity. We pray that always full of faith we may hunger and thirst after righteousness, and being strengthened by the grace of the meat of salvation, we may so do His work, that the sacrament which we have received may not be our condemnation, but our remedy. Through our Lord.

*nostri corpus et sanguinem... credentes unitatem beatæ Trinitatis. Oramus ut semper nobis fide plenis esurire detur ac sitire justitiam, sicque opus ejus, confortati salutaris escæ gratia, faciamus, ut non in iudicium, sed in remedium, sacramentum quod accepimus, habeamus. Per Dominum nostrum.*

COLLECT AT THE END OF MASS.

O Lord Christ, who willest that the faithful should feed on Thy Body, and be made Thy Body, grant that what we have taken may be for the remission of our sins; and that the Divine nourishment given by Thy blessing, may so be mingled with our soul, that the Flesh being subject unto the spirit, and brought into peaceful agreement, may be obedient, and not contend, through the Holy Spirit, who liveth and reigneth, in the unity of the Father and the Son, coeternal, for ever and ever. Amen.

COLLECTIO IN FINE MISSÆ.

Christe Domine, qui et tuo vesci corpore, et tuum corpus effici vis Fideles, fac nobis in remissionem peccatorum esse quod sumpsimus: atque ita se animæ nostræ divina alimonia per benedictionem tuam facta permisceat, ut caro spiritui subdita, et in consensum pacificum subjugata obtemperet, non repugnet, per Spiritum Sanctum qui in unitate Patris et Filii, coæternus vivit et regnat in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

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The solemnities for the Festival of St. German are described, according to Bona, in the Mozarabic Missal. A sermon preached by Hericus on that day, whether the 1st of October or the 31st of July, is still preserved. He there compares German to Elijah, especially in the matter of abstinence. Elijah however, he observes, was

fed by ravens, but St. German usually eat only once a week, and then barley bread alone. He shows how he was a Doctor of the whole world, and had obtained a rank among the chief members of Christ's body ; and how his great holiness procured him distinction in every country. He claims him especially for Gaul as her Apostle ; and ends his sermon by a prayer addressed to St. German. This latter practice he had justified in a special work on the miracles of St. German.<sup>1</sup> He there blames those who say that the souls of the Saints are in Abraham's bosom, or in a place of refreshment, or under the Altar of God, and not able to be present at their tombs and wheresoever they please. He appeals to St. Jerome's language against Vigilantius. The Saints, he says, follow the Lamb wherever He goeth, therefore they may be any where. As they enjoy the presence of God, who knoweth all things, they themselves know every thing in nature, but they are especially present at their earthly remains. (It may here be remarked that St. Thomas Aquinas restricts their knowledge to what is going on in the earth.) And by way of proving his belief in this respect, he describes himself as falling down before the sepulchre, kissing the sacred stone, and humbly venerating his patron as if he were suspended over his head, and ever worshipping with fidelity the place where his feet had stood. In short, he bids men honour St. German and the rest of the Saints with pious devotion, and implore them with earnest affection.

St. German, we have seen, was buried in the chapel of St. Maurice. In process of time Queen Clothilde, the wife of Clovis, who was married in 493, and died in

<sup>1</sup> § 124. ch. iii.



543, built a large Basilica over the tomb of the Bishop.<sup>1</sup> On which occasion St. Lupus, different from St. Lupus of Troyes, came with her from Burgundy to Auxerre ; and was subsequently buried there himself. Her eldest son, Clothaire, afterwards employed St. Desiderius, then Bishop of Auxerre, to build a beautiful *Freda* over St. German's remains, that is, a little covered chapel such as we see in Cathedrals now. It was adorned with silver and gold, and bore the inscription of the royal builder. Ingundis, his wife, presented valuable vessels and vestments, especially a golden cup studded with precious stones, and bearing the name of the Queen. This spot soon became famous for its miracles, according to Hericus.<sup>2</sup> Old men in his time asserted they had seen numberless cures performed on the sick, the possessed, the deaf and the dumb. The testimony of St. Nicetius in his letter to Queen Chlodouinda, in 565, has already been given.<sup>3</sup> St. Gregory of Tours relates, that in the time of Queen Teudechild, Nonninus, a tribune, having come from Auvergne to Auxerre for religious motives, struck off a small piece of the stone from the tomb of St. German, whereupon he immediately became as stiff as brass.<sup>4</sup> Having considered the guilt of his presumption, he made a vow to consecrate the relic in a Church he intended to erect in honour of St. German in Auvergne. And after having made the vow, was released at once from the punishment. "Into this same Church which Nonninus erected at Mozac, in Auvergne," continues Gregory, "I myself went, in company with my uncle Avitus,

<sup>1</sup> Heric. Ch. iv. de Mir. § 39. Beaunier Abbayes de France, tom. ii. p. 840. Gallia Christ.

<sup>2</sup> § 40. <sup>3</sup> See Introd. <sup>4</sup> Ch. 41, Gloria Confessorum.

Bishop of Auvergne, and on our entering a smell of roses and lilies exhaled from the place, which we attributed to the merits of the blessed German."

It would be long and tedious to enumerate the very many miracles which Hericus, who wrote in the ninth century, represents to have taken place either at Auxerre, or in other places where St. German was particularly honoured. The following is selected, from many much more astonishing in their character and effects, chiefly because the narrator was witness to it himself. On the 31st of July,<sup>1</sup> he says, when Soissons and all its Churches and monasteries were resounding with the praises of the Saint, he, (Hericus) proceeded with some others to one of the Churches dedicated to St. German. Before his arrival the bell began to ring of itself, and only ceased when he had entered. There was no vestige of any one, since all had previously departed from the Church ; and he himself considered the ringing as miraculous ; but however lest his testimony should be deemed partial, he made no mention of it himself, but let his companions spread the account. For the same reasons it would be unfair in a historical point of view to omit another miracle for which Hericus gives good testimony. In the year 869,<sup>2</sup> Adalricus of Sens, who had been afflicted with an infirmity and contraction of the limbs for twelve years, and had visited the tombs of many other Saints in vain, came to Auxerre for the festival of the first of October. A large multitude were assembled from all quarters. Already half of the vigil had elapsed, and the Psalm, "Te decet hymnus Deus in Sion,"<sup>3</sup> was being sung in the Church, when suddenly the voice of Adalricus filled the place and

<sup>1</sup> § 67.

<sup>2</sup> § 104.

<sup>3</sup> Psalm lxiv. or lxxv.

frightened the people and the choir, who were chaunting the divine office. The people rushed towards him and found him senseless ; after a short space of time he recovered, and regained his perfect strength, and was alive in Hericus's time to confirm the account of his cure.

In 859, took place the translation of St. German's remains from the chapel of St. Maurice, and the Basilica, which Queen Clothilde had erected, to a more splendid edifice. The circumstances of it were these.<sup>1</sup> Conrad, or Chuonradus, was brother of Judith of Bavaria, the second wife of Louis-le-Débonnaire, and consequently was uncle to Charles-le-Chauve. He had married Adalais, the daughter of Louis-le-Débonnaire. Both were eminent for their piety. Conrad was, together with his other princely dignities, Commendatory Abbot of St. German's monastery at Auxerre. It was the sad custom of the age for powerful men to plunder Ecclesiastical property, but there were some great exceptions.<sup>2</sup> Among these was Conrad. He had long been subject to a disease of the eye, which defied the art of medicine,<sup>3</sup> and he was about to undergo a caustic application, when having risen once before sunrise, he approached the sepulchre of St. German, where the monks were observing their vigil. The tomb happened to be covered with herbs ; he applied some of them to his eye, and immediately recovered the use of it. As a present token of his gratitude, he offered up some golden bracelets to the shrine ; but he contemplated greater proofs of it hereafter. He soon communicated to his wife his purpose of raising a more magnificent monument to St. German. Adalais eagerly entered into his

<sup>1</sup> Hericus, B. ii. Ch. i. § 84.

<sup>2</sup> § 85.

<sup>3</sup> § 86.

views, and went to visit the actual monastery.<sup>1</sup> A favourable piece of ground was found, on the eastern side of the town, where the hill presents a gentle declivity, supposed to be well suited to an edifice. The most experienced architects were engaged, and a model of wax was first made ; which being approved, the greatest ardour was evinced in order to realize it. Some of the monks were sent to Arles and Marseilles, to obtain the materials of the fine ruins which remained there. The spoils of paganism were thus destined to adorn a Christian monument. Having effected their object, they laid the precious charge on barges and sailed up the Rhone. As they journeyed, a violent storm came upon them, and they were obliged to land at a spot where they found a Church dedicated to St. German, and famous for the security which it was said to spread over the country. After they had prayed there for some time, they returned, and found the storm abated ; they again embarked, and at last arrived safe at Auxerre. The columns and other materials and ornaments which they had brought, proved to be all in character and in proportion with the building, a circumstance considered miraculous by Hericus. One of the columns, being placed upon its basis, was elevated by a number of hands ; but all their efforts were unable to give it a right balance ; and it was in the very act of falling, and all had withdrawn to avoid the danger, when suddenly it rose again and placed itself without help in its right position.

It appears Conrad did not live to see the remains of St. German translated to the new building. In 859, Lewis of Germany, the brother of Charles-le-Chauve, taking advantage of a faction in France, made

war upon Charles, in spite of the league which had been made at Verdun, in 843, respecting the division of Charlemagne's Empire between his three grandsons, Lothaire, Lewis, and Charles. Charles-le-Chauve, conscious of the inequality of his forces, resolved to seek aid from God ; and as he was on his way to meet the army of his brother, he passed by Auxerre. It was the day of the Epiphany, when accompanied by Bishops and Priests alone, he approached the tomb of St. German, and had it opened. The corpse appeared in perfect preservation. Charles having performed his devotions, the Bishops were enjoined to cover the body with costly garments, and pour balm and incense over it. After which the translation took place to the Edifice raised by Conrad. Proceeding thence, the king obtained a complete victory over his brother without loss of blood, and henceforth reigned in peace. Miracles were performed during this translation. A young man, who was a cripple, obtained his recovery while in the act of praying in the Church in the presence of the whole people, and we may add in that of Hericus himself, our authority, since he was monk of St. German's at that time. Another on the same occasion regained the use of his speech. From this time, the sixth of January, besides the solemnities of the Epiphany, was celebrated with an express commemoration of St. German's translation ; to which purpose the Martyrology of Auxerre for that day has the following notice : " At Auxerre the translation of the body of St. German the Bishop from the sepulchre to the new crypt, was performed by the Bishop of Auxerre, Abbo, in the presence and at the request of Charles-le-Chauve, king of the French." It appears then that the edifice which Conrad built was annexed to the original Chapel of St. Maurice, and

to the Monastery of St. German<sup>1</sup> (not the same as that which he in his life had founded,) and that the translation was but a short distance. This Monastery would therefore have been a large enclosure with several edifices contained in it, as we see in the vestiges of some old and famous Abbeys.

Within the precincts there were many places of worship,<sup>2</sup> and as many altars in honour of Saints. For the remains of many other Saints were soon conveyed to this sacred spot. Those of St. Urban and Tiburtius were brought from Rome in 862, as a gift of Pope Nicolas the First.<sup>3</sup> There were also the relics of the Saintly Bishops who had governed the Church of Auxerre, among whom were St. Peregrinus, the first Bishop, and his successors.<sup>4</sup> On the right hand were St. Urban and St. Innocent. Next to them St. Alodius, the successor of St. German, St. Ursus, St. Romanus, St. Theodosius, Bishops of Auxerre. Near the Pedum (or Crosier) to the east, beside the altar, was St. Aunarius, Bishop of Auxerre. To the left was St. Tiburtius, sent from Rome, with five Bishops, Fraternus, Censurius, the friend of Constantius the writer, Gregorius, Desiderius, and Lupus, the latter of whom had come from Burgundy, as we have seen, in company with Clothilde, the wife of Clovis. Together with these were St. Moderatus, a boy, St. Optatus, Bishop, and two priests, St. Sanctinus and St. Memorius.<sup>5</sup> In process of time, many other sacred remains were there deposited, among which were those of a Pope. Lothaire, the son of Charles-le-Chauve, on his death-bed gave orders that a light might be always kept burning before the shrine.

<sup>1</sup> Bosch. Com.

<sup>2</sup> *Orationum loca*, § 123. Heric.    <sup>3</sup> § 108.    <sup>4</sup> § 117.

<sup>5</sup> See Beaunier, *Abbayes de France*. Bosch. Com.

When the Normans in the ninth century made a violent irruption, the remains of St. German were carefully buried, according to Nevelo, a contemporary author, and remained thus till the beginning of the tenth century. Such was the reverence in which they continued to be held, that when Robert, king of France, in the succeeding age called a council at Auxerre, and the relics of other Saints according to custom were brought to it, Hugo, the Bishop, refused to send those of St. German, urging that they were too valuable. In great calamities however they were carried about. In the time of William the Conqueror, one of the fingers was amputated by a monk of Auxerre, and carried into England, where it became the occasion of the foundation of the celebrated Monastery of St. German, at Selby in Yorkshire, the noble abbey of which still exists. The circumstances of it are curious as illustrating the origin of a monastic establishment, but are too numerous for the present purpose. In 1375, John, Duke of Berry, assigned a yearly sum of gold for the preservation of the coffin. At last in 1567, on the 27th of September, the Huguenots took Auxerre. All are agreed that the remains of St. German on this fatal occasion were violated, but the manner is not quite certain. Le Beuf, a canon of Paris, in his history of the Sacrilege, says that the Huguenots on entering sent immediately a detachment to the monastery of St. German, before the monks had time to carry any thing away ; and that the whole wealth of this opulent establishment fell into their hands. St. German's tomb, with six others, he adds, was broken up, and the sacred remains torn from their receptacles and trampled upon. In this confusion it does not appear what was rescued ; but the prevalent opinion at

Auxerre in 1663, when Viola, the Prior of that institution, wrote his life of St. German, was, that the Huguenots themselves under Divine impulse restored the relics. Other accounts more or less probable were current. But it is pretty certain that when the Bollandists published their Acts of St. German, there were still existing at Auxerre a piece of the silk dress with the imperial arms which Placidia had given ; a bone of one of the fingers ; the sepulchre of stone ; the ashes of the Saint ; and the fragments of the cypress coffin, the gift of the same Empress. These were probably concealed from the Huguenots under earth. They were officially declared to be the relics of St. German by Séguier the Bishop, and are said to have effected miracles.

At Paris in the Church St. Germain l'Auxerois, famous for its historical connexions, there was before the Revolution a bone in a silver case belonging to the Saint. At Verdun, Miége, and Montfaucon, there were likewise some bones ; at Evreux a part of the skull ; at Chessy some of the ribs. Pope Urban V., once abbot of St. German's, obtained a bone. The following places, Lembrun, St. Julien d'Auxerre, St. Remi at Reims, St. Pierre at Corbi, St. Pierre in Champagne, Rennes, St. Stephen at Auxerre, Cahors, Coutances, Gron near Sens, Metz, Nancy, Bayeux, Caen, Cluni, Cologne, and a place on the banks of the Meuse, called Rutilensis Carthusia, in the Latin—all produced claims of a similar kind. Whether any relics in France have been preserved from the revolutionary profanations, is still to be learnt. Whether any survive the Reformation and the Rebellion in England, at St. Albans, St. Germans in Cornwall, or Selby in Yorkshire, need hardly be enquired.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

*Conclusion.*

READERS are now very capricious people. In many cases, they will not let the writer suggest a moral observation upon the facts he has related to them ; they are disgusted if he do, and say it is unreal, or it is common-place, or it is tedious, and the like. And yet, in many others, they are very glad to find that the author agrees with them ; and it greatly tends to recommend a book, if one be so fortunate as to touch upon the right string ; and a sentiment or an opinion here and there, which approves itself, will make many a dull book pass off for good. In the middle ages, writers would altogether have discarded these and similar niceties, and said just as much as they themselves thought right, neither more nor less. But at present, the matter is very different. There are plenty of persons who read, but few who read what does not please them, and moral and general reflections usually come under this category. In the middle ages again, authors were as different as readers. Writing was a kind of sacred employment. Those who wrote books were acknowledged by all to be deeply conversant with their subject. Now, men write in order to become conversant with it. Of course, persons who are considered fit to make books, are generally those who, besides acquaintance with a subject, have natural capacities for the task. Yet this was not a necessary or invariable consequence in the middle ages. His-

tories, for instance, were written by men who had been present at the facts related. It was a secondary consideration whether they were fit persons to judge of facts. Or again, they were written by men who were known to be familiar with the tradition or the inheritance of facts, which passed on religiously from one generation to another. It did not follow, as a matter of course, that they were good critics, or had imagination enough to understand past ages ; although, in reality, they did, in the majority of cases, possess these endowments. From this cause, in a great measure, seems to have arisen that profound respect in which books were held. We hear of even secular books, ornamented in the most costly style, with shining clasps, to keep out the dust, and appropriate desks, to expose them to the view of all. Writing, as was before said, was a sacred avocation. It was the privilege of the Religious in their holy seclusion : " Read, write, and sing," says the author of the Imitation. It was sanctified by the devout exercises of the monks, and guarded from profane novelties by the attentive vigilance of the Superior. Natural abilities came into play here as elsewhere, but they were directed and applied wisely. Guibert de Nogent, in the eleventh century, is an instance of this. He was by nature very quick, and ready at writing verses. When the Superior of his Monastery perceived his turn of mind, he bid him be on his guard against a bad use of his talents. Guibert was then obliged to write in secret, for he felt he did not apply them to the honour of God ; and subsequently, this gave him violent pangs of conscience, and brought from him a most humble confession of guilt. Yet his abilities were not allowed to remain dormant. At a fit time, he was appointed by

his Abbot to compose a theological work, for the instruction and edification of Christians.<sup>1</sup> Other occasions also there were of writing. Men came back from the Crusades : they were the proper persons to write about the Crusades. Or again, others had been the intimate friends of great men : these were the best qualified to compose their Life, and make known their private sayings. At present, subjects of this kind are put into the hands of a good editor. But then, it was the wise statesman and minister, who had been at all the privy councils of his sovereign ; or it was the bosom friend of a Saint, who knew his inward life. It mattered little whether he was an ingenious, clever thinker, and could illustrate a plausible theory or a favourite principle. His work was precious from the circumstances of its composition. Contrary to the rule of Aristotle, it was the morality or qualifications of the writer, not of the composition, which constituted its claims to the regard of the public. Men were far too matter-of-fact and simple-minded to take up the tests and canons of literary etiquette.

However, notwithstanding such great disadvantages, arising from the present disposition of both writers and readers, (be content, gentle reader, to bear part of the blame) something like an attempt shall be hazarded, at giving a practical turn to the variety of materials which have come before us in St. German's Life. And to avoid further preliminaries.

I. What are we to think of St. Mamertinus's wonderful story, as related in the eighth Chapter ? That he was a Pagan, and lost the use of his sight and hand, and was induced by one Sabinus to go to Auxerre, to

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Vita Guib. Noving. b. i. chap. xvii.—[?]

seek for St. German, and came at night into the Mons Autricus, the Cemetery, and there fell asleep on the tomb and in the cell of a departed Saint—this is plain enough and indisputable. But what was that which followed? Was it a real thing, or was it a vision? And here the subject becomes serious, and we must “put off our shoes from our feet, for the place where we stand is holy ground.” For what, indeed, do we mean, when we draw a distinction between realities and visions? Is it untrue to say that everything is real, that everything is the action of Almighty God upon His creation, and especially upon His spiritual creation, if such distinction may be made? God works by instruments, or what we view as instruments; He makes the things of the external world, objects, times, circumstances, events, associations, to impress the action of His Will upon men. The bad and the good receive the same impressions, but their judgment concerning them differs. The moral sight of the one is vitiated, that of the others indefinitely pure. If, then, the only real thing to us be the communication of the Divine Mind to our mind, is there room to enquire whether the occasion or medium of that communication is real? At least, it would appear that St. Mamertinus considered the enquiry superfluous. The very obscurity which impends over his narrative, and which has purposely been preserved in this Life, may, for aught we know, be owing to the impossibility of drawing any material distinctions between what are called real events and visions or dreams. For it must be remembered that Constantius introduces the very language of St. Mamertinus into his Life of St. German. It was a book which apparently had but recently come out, in which St. Mamertinus published to the world the his-

tory of his own mysterious conversion. And Constantius seems to have a scruple in taking any liberties with it, and consequently inserts it, as it was, into his own work. Now it is certainly remarkable that the subject himself of so wonderful an occurrence, should hesitate whether he ought to call it a reality or a vision, sometimes adapting his phraseology to the one aspect of the matter, sometimes to the other. Yet what is this but what had four hundred years before been exemplified and sanctioned by Inspiration itself? In the history of Cornelius's conversion, himself a Gentile, the same ambiguity is apparent. In the very beginning, how singular, if we may so speak, the words, "He saw a vision *evidently*." Here, however, the apparition of the angel is clearly called a vision. Yet, when the messengers of Cornelius came to St. Peter, they said nothing about a vision, but "Cornelius, the centurion, was warned from God by an holy angel." Nay, Cornelius himself, when Peter came to him, spoke as if it had been no vision. "Four days ago, I was fasting until this hour ; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and *behold a man stood before me and said.*" Was this not, at once, both a vision and a reality? Could God's purposes be more distinctly revealed? In like manner, the whole of what happened to Mamertinus had but one end, one object, the imparting of Almighty God's gracious mercies to a lost and sinful creature. Life itself is as much a vision as any thing in sleep ; it is the moving to and fro of ever flitting images ; there is one, and one only, substantial fact in life, the existence of created beings in the presence of their Omnipotent Maker. And such, apparently, was the ultimate aspect in which St. Mamertinus came to view his conversion, ever less complex,

more simple, more one, as he advanced in holiness, "without which no man will see the Lord." He most probably lived till 468, about fifteen years before Constantius began to write his Life, and would therefore be at that time an old man, one who had fought the good fight. For he was a young man when St. German was above forty, and apparently outlived him as long as twenty years, having become Abbot of the Monastery only at a late period. But so it is ; Almighty God has never been seen, and yet is always seen. Every thing around us is a symbol of His presence. Does not the sublime author of the City of God speak after this wise ? "Be not surprised," he says, "if God, though He be invisible, is said to have appeared *visibly* to the Fathers. For as the sound which conveys the thought that dwells in the silence of the mind, is not one and the same thing with it, so that form in which God is seen, who yet dwells in the invisible, was not one with Him. Nevertheless, He was visible in this same bodily form, just as thought is audible in the sound of the voice ; and the Fathers knew that *they saw an invisible God* in that bodily form, which yet was not He. For Moses spake unto Him who also spake, and yet he said unto Him, 'If I have found grace in Thy sight, show me now Thyself, that I may see Thee with knowledge.'"<sup>1</sup>

To conform, however, to the ordinary modes of speech, (and we cannot but do so as long as things appear multiple, instead of simple) it is conceived that what occurred while St. Mamertinus was in the cell of St. Corcodemus, was what we call a vision. St. Florentinus in white and shining garments, at the entrance

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xxxiii. 13. Lib. x. ch. 13. Civ. Dei.

of the cell ; St. Corcodemus issuing from the tomb and joining his ancient companions ; the beautiful dialogue concerning the penitent Pagan ; the five holy Bishops celebrating their Votive Mass in the Church ; the discourse between the Apostle St. Peregrine and Mamertinus ; and the subsequent antiphonal strains issuing from the Church,—all was part of the vision. But the vision was so clear ; its effects and fulfilment were so complete, that it had nothing, as it were, to distinguish it from a real event, except that it occurred in sleep. Dreams and visions have ever held a prominent part in God's marvellous dispensations. The form is a dream, the substance a reality. We cannot bear the reality without the form. "Now we see through a glass darkly ; but then face to face ; now I know in part ; but then shall I know even as I am known."<sup>1</sup> A notion attaches to dreams and visions which we think we can cast off ; they do not hang by us with the vividness of real events. They have a meaning ; yet they admit of being otherwise viewed. This is our infirmity, but it is wisely ordained, for we are men.

St. Mamertinus affords a striking fulfilment of the prophecy ; "In the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams"<sup>2</sup> In proportion then, as the clearness with which God communicates with His creatures diminishes, may we not infer that there is on their part a corresponding withdrawing from His presence ? When the phenomena of the external world usurp more and more of the faith and confidence of men, and are no longer

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Acts ii. 17.

viewed as mere instruments and media, but rather as self-existing substances, is this not a sign that men are daily retiring further from the influence of that Blessed Spirit which was poured upon all flesh ? On the other hand, what an unearthly character must have been stamped upon the life of St. Mamertinus ! To have been brought into the presence of the unseen world, what a range of heavenly recollections, what a sacramental glow over his whole future life ! But let us proceed.

II. No one will say that St. German was not a holy man of the highest order. It demands no proof but the mere narrative of facts. There is not a circumstance of his life, since his conversion, which requires explanation or apology (unless it be the Deposition of Chelidonius, his connexion with which is extremely obscure and uncertain). The question is rather, how did he become thus holy, thus great, and in so short a time ? How is it that the sanctity of so many ancient Saints was so easy, natural, even, uniform, marked, unflinching, unmingled, resolute ? We think we are reading of angels ; where is the man ? In the case of St. German, we have before had occasion to remark, that a progression at least, in gifts, powers, and confidence, is apparent ; that a change, by no means indefinite, seems to have taken place after the lapse of twelve years, and the completion of his Apostolic work. But the mystery remains nearly the same. How, from the beginning, did he live, as we read he did ? Men of old had like passions with ourselves, we cannot doubt it ; how then did they become suddenly Saints ? We hear, indeed, of groans of penitence, and fasts and vigils and prayers ; but how do these also come all at once ? To those who would be Saints now, not only everything without is opposed, but their very



selves are at war with them ; and not the least feature of this opposition, is the ignorance and confusion which they have concerning the whole matter of saintliness and the righteousness required of the Gospel. But in ancient times, the old man seems to have been put off like a garment, altogether, and without remnant ; the new man, like a bright robe without a patch, without a stain, taken up in its place. Surely history must be false here, if anywhere ; or rather, partial and incomplete. It may be good for us that it should be so, as an exercise of our faith. But it is also right that meditation should try to recover the lost side of the picture ; and its recoveries may be brought out to the view of others, not as superseding the same exercise of faith in them, (for no subsequent labours, bestowed upon a distant period, can supply the evidence which contemporary testimony has denied,) but as affording materials for their reflections, and testing the spirituality of their discernment. History then, the biographies of Saints included, is a structure that has been built up according to rules of its own, and these rules have ever been imperfect. Effect, so to say, and appearance, have been its leading principles, principles not necessarily erroneous ; nay, in the common run, the guide of life and the foundation of society. But principles which are guides for men may be indefinitely imperfect, because men are imperfect ; and in the training for the life of angels, we require something more than their defective canon, an ever nearer approach to those laws which are to be our guide in that heavenly society which we hope to join. Now history has had the same yearnings, the same ideal ; but history has applied it to this world, which can never be what heaven is. Repose is the ideal of beauty. Ac-

cordingly, history has invested the Saints on earth with all the attributes of repose ; and as qualities in themselves are one thing and not another, white is white, black is black, the Church militant has been represented in the same uniform character of repose with the Church triumphant, from beginning to end. It has been thought that the pure white could not come out itself from the antecedent admixture of discordant colours, it could be no abstraction, no extract from opposite natures, it must have been ever there whole and perfect, or nowhere at all. In this manner, many, very many, of the old Saints, stand out like beautiful statues, serene, unruffled, sublime, ethereal, unearthly ; and such they were in truth, but not this alone. The character of St. German subsequent to his conversion, is an example of these historical types, one of those radiant faultless pictures which line the long galleries of the vestibule of heaven, the Church on earth.

Now that there is another side of the picture, and that it is not without its profit to beholders, seems to be shown by those instances where Saints have been the relaters of their own lives. Doubtless, Possidius' *Life of St. Augustine* does not read like St. Augustine's own *Confessions*. The value then of this last work is this, that it discloses the probation of the Saint. We have in the case of St. German all that was external, all that was intended to carry on the type of sanctity from generation to generation, but we must look beyond testimony for the history of his probation, or his struggle with "the rulers of the darkness of this world." On the other hand, in the *Confessions*, we seem to discover all the wonderful threads which go to make up the tissue of the Saints' white robe, we find

some going one way, some another, some again crossing each other, and yet all kept together by the broad hem which encircles them, and in the end making up in discordant ways the one spotless garment. Some light may perhaps be thrown upon St. German's inward life by comparing it with this marvellous book. But first let us ascertain somewhat more clearly the ground on which we are to stand.

It is fully admitted that there is something evidently extraordinary and miraculous in St. German's conversion and subsequent life. But this alone does not seem a sufficient account of the matter. All grace is extraordinary and miraculous, and yet we may still enquire about the *how* or the way on the part of man. Man is a free agent, though the measures of God's grace may vary ever so much. Through grace, doubtless, St. German reached those heights of holiness which we view with awe and wonder ; but grace is given to perform a work, and where is this work ? grace is given to conquer nature, where is the conquest ? This is all that is asked. Effects require predisposing causes. Allow for argument sake that one and all follow by unavoidable necessity, yet the history of them remains the same ; if we read of the one, we may enquire about the other. Nor is there any thing to show that the notion of miracles implies the exclusion of other causes and means ; for though as regards the irrational world, it might not appear absurd to suppose an effect produced without any other cause but the miracle itself ; yet in the case of rational and responsible beings to suppose the end for which their reason and responsibility were given, to be attained without the means of these, involves an obvious inconsistency. And here Butler has a far-searching saying which seems to suit the present pur-

pose. "Nor do we know," he says, "how far it is possible in the nature of things, that effects should be wrought in us at once, equivalent to habits, i. e. what is wrought by use and exercise."<sup>1</sup> The possession of moral habits, under which denomination Christian virtues and holiness are to be placed, however connected with and dependent upon the miracle of God's grace, is yet not like the possession of those miraculous gifts which were bestowed in the beginning of Christianity, of which men had the power of making a bad or a good use, as they chose. Holiness is a habit and an act. A habit or an act is not a faculty or a power. It is in the nature of the latter to be applied to contraries, but the other is one energy definite and exclusive. For indeed holiness is in energy, not in virtue ; or if in some sense it may be said to be virtual, it is so in one way, not in contrary ways ; that is, in leading on to further holiness, or, as the Psalmist says, going on from strength to strength. Holiness cannot therefore be a gift of God independent of man's exertions and consent ; if it be an energy of man, it must work through him and with him, for it is an effect, not an instrument ; and the very essence of it is that it is an effect of human agency. And here again we may compare another passage of the same writer, though applied by him to another subject. "It appears from Scripture," he says, "that as it was not unusual for persons, upon their conversion to Christianity, to be endued with miraculous gifts ; so some of those persons exercised these gifts in a strangely irregular and disorderly manner (which could not be said with regard to holiness or other habits).....Consider a person endued with any of

<sup>1</sup> Anal. p. 87.

these gifts ; for instance that of tongues : it is to be supposed that he had the same power over this miraculous gift, as he would have had over it, had it been the effect of habit, of study and use, as it ordinarily is (and here the effect of habit will not be confounded with the habit itself, the effect of habit being viewed as an instrument merely ;) or the same power over it, as he had over any other natural endowment. Consequently he would use it in the same manner he did any other, either regularly and upon proper occasions only, or irregularly and upon improper ones ; according to his sense of decency and his character of prudence.”<sup>1</sup> It may be added that holiness in the beginning was indeed, though not properly a faculty or instrument, an endowment like any other ; but man having fallen, a distinction naturally arose between what came from God alone, and what man contributed, for man was no longer the creature of God as it came out of His hands ; something foreign to God, if one may so speak, a negative nature had attached itself to his original nature ; there was henceforth a self, a will, a spontaneity ; holiness was now to be a recovery and an act, not a mere gift or a necessary condition.

If the case stand thus, let us endeavour to apply it to St. German. The first thing that astonishes us in his conversion, is that he was taken by surprise. He has been irritated by the bold conduct of Bishop Amator, he proceeds to Auxerre to take vengeance upon him, he learns that he has set off to Autun, he awaits his return, he hears him resign his Episcopal Office, he is perhaps not over-sorry, he goes to see the end of the matter in Church, and join in the general election of a

<sup>1</sup> Anal. p. 182.

successor. Suddenly he is surrounded with priests, stripped of his secular robes, clad in a clerical dress, deprived of his hair, and nominated to the Bishopric of Auxerre. Now we will not stop to enquire whether this violent behaviour of St. German involved a habitual contempt of religion, though we may rather infer the contrary ; we will not make conjectures about the influence, which the vicinity of holiness, a virtuous education, the high outward estimation in which religion was held, a character naturally aspiring and elevated, and the effects of a diffused literature pregnant with Christian verities and solemn warnings, may have had upon the mind of the Duke and Governor of the Armorican and Nervican Provinces ; although we might make many inductions from the habits of thoughtfulness and the sense of responsibility which an office so full of high and accountable functions was calculated to produce, the enforcement of duty and discipline on others, the necessity of example in self, the probability that an exalted statesman is on the whole upright and religious when no impeachment against his character in these respects is on record ;—all this we must leave as we find it. Certain it is, that the immediate preliminaries of his ordination and nomination were any thing but adequate to the character we afterwards find him sustaining, and that there was an evident abruptness and harshness in this remarkable transition of his life. But two months elapsed before he was consecrated Bishop of Auxerre ; and it is expressly declared, that during that time he used every endeavour and means in his power to escape from the new charge that was imposed upon him. Is there not here some clue to that inward struggle which forms the secret history of Saints ? Is there not here a shadow of that

side of the picture of the Saint which we were seeking ? Let us dwell on these two months. The internal struggle must have lasted through life (for it did so in St. Anthony), but it is something gained, to get an insight into these two months.

What are two months ? Fifty-six or sixty days. But sixteen or twenty days may well have been filled up with the business and tumult of Election, the resignation of a civil appointment (a letter to Autun or Arles might well have been answered in a week or ten days), the preparations for Consecration, and the reception of the three Bishops who were to consecrate him. Forty days remain, and forty days previous to a ministry ! This seems to open a new view of the subject. Time is a mysterious thing, concerning which we have but very dim conceptions. Some have thought it to be the mere indispensable mode in which all our thoughts are conceived. At least, that it is measured by the succession of our ideas, seems clear enough. And if so, there is nothing to prevent a year being compressed into an hour. The year of one rational being, may be the hour of another ; nay, a year may, to the same individual, be less than an hour under different circumstances. It is almost proverbial, that every year the years seem to roll round faster ; which so happens, not perhaps because the younger we are the more ideas we have, whereby the year seems to be more full of incidents ; but rather the contrary, because the relations of ideas which are presented to the mind as it grows older, become so numerous, that they successively drive each other away, and a less definite impression, on the whole, is left, than when we were young, and ideas, from being few, were more indelible. How much may pass in the mind during forty days ! What

various and countless thoughts may have arisen in the seclusion of one Lent ! How the memory has at times been so vividly awakened as to partake of the nature of actual representation ! How the future has been measured out by anticipation, with almost prophetic reality ! How the multiplicity of things has wonderfully been conjured up before the sight of the mind by a glimpse of the one, the primary form of all things, the Law of the Divine Wisdom and Knowledge, Unity ! But forty days have a still more sacred association. It was the period of our Divine Master's Temptation—shall we say Probation ? Yes, for though He could not sin, yet He took upon Him our flesh, to endure the like trials with us, though ever without guilt.<sup>1</sup> And, if the thought may be expressed with the deepest awe and reverence, what a range of things were within that short space presented to Him in the form of Temptations ! The world itself came before His eyes, all its glories, its proud kings, its opulent cities, its conquering armies, its ambitious fleets, its philosophers and their systems ! And behold here the three great trials to which human nature is subject at once brought together, the desires of the flesh, the ambition of the mind, the pride of the heart ; the first, when bread was the occasion ; the second, when the world was the end ; the last, when self was the centre : “ If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down.” It might be profane to introduce such a subject as this, were He not the example of all Saints, and were it possible to speak of holiness and supernatural gifts without instancing Him. Nay, the more

<sup>1</sup> “ Ut esset in similitudine carnis peccati pœna sine culpâ.”  
—Aug. De Peccatorum Meritis. Lib. i. 60 §.



holy men have been, (and no doubt St. German yielded to none in this respect) the more reason we have for presuming that they were brought within the like vicinity of Satan's devices. The more grace abounded in St. German, the more sure we may be that he began not his ministry without contending with the powers of darkness. It was immediately after the descent of the Holy Ghost on the baptized Son of man, that He was led away into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil. Now we are expressly told, that after St. German's wonderful ordination, it was with great difficulty he could bring himself to accept the charge of Bishop, to which he was elected.<sup>1</sup> Nothing, as it appears, but absolute force made him consent at last to be consecrated ; the people, the clergy, the nobility, all were against him. What then must have passed in his mind during the suspense ! Let us consider what it requires to make up our minds to be faithful servants of God. Some, indeed, take a rapid glance of the capabilities of the future ; others are slow in imagining the difficulties they will have to encounter. Some, by a marvellous penetration (and this was one of St. German's gifts) see at once the course they will have to pursue ; others have enough to do to prepare for immediate struggles. But for all there are countless things in prospect to meet, there are as many in the retrospect to forego and to undo ; and men will sleep rather for sorrow, before they come fully to realize the scene before them. We are not, however, quite at a loss for historical information, to conceive what might be the struggles of Saints even after conversion. St. Augustine's Confessions, as was

<sup>1</sup> See ch. v.

before observed, will ever be a record to show how much may be renounced, how much may be attained, through God's grace. He had said in another work, when charged with his previous life by enemies, "I do toil much in my thoughts, struggling against my evil suggestions, and having lasting and almost continual conflict with the temptations of the enemy, who would subvert me. I groan to God in my infirmity ; and He knoweth what my heart laboureth with."<sup>1</sup> And, indeed, never can it be said that a previous life goes for nothing, though it be ever so changed afterwards. The evil effects of bad customs still remain ; and worldliness of mind, which it seems may be imputed to St. German's former state, is not the least permanent. About the very time at which St. German became Bishop of Auxerre, St. Augustine was using the following language concerning himself ; "In this so vast wilderness, full of snares and dangers, behold many of them I have cut off, and thrust out of my heart, as Thou hast given me, O God of my salvation. And yet when dare I say, since so many things of this kind buzz on all sides about our daily life,—when dare I say that nothing of this sort engages my attention, or causes in me an idle interest ? True, the theatres do not now carry me away, nor care I to know the courses of the stars, nor did my soul ever consult ghosts, departed ; all sacrilegious mysteries I detest....Notwithstanding, in how many most petty and contemptible things is our curiosity daily tempted, and how often we give way, who can recount ? How often do we begin, as if we were tolerating people telling vain sto-

<sup>1</sup> Serm. 3, in Ps. 36, § 19. Apud Oxford Transl. of the Confessions, p. 223. Nota.

ries, lest we offend the weak ; then, by degrees, we take interest therein, &c.”<sup>1</sup> But St. German was to refrain even from things in themselves lawful. His wife Eustachia was now to become his sister.<sup>2</sup> How fitly might he again say with St. Augustine, “ Verily, Thou enjoimest me continency from the ‘ lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the ambition of the world.’ Thou enjoimest continency from concubinage ; and for wedlock itself, Thou hast counselled something better than what Thou hast permitted. And since Thou gavest it, it was done, even before I became a dispenser of Thy sacrament. But there yet live in my memory the images of such things, as my ill custom there fixed ; which haunt me strengthless when I am awake.”<sup>3</sup> But more than this, there are pleasures innocent, and even elevating, which yet the Saint does not allow himself to enjoy. They seem to belong to higher natures than men have, and yet they are violently appropriated by the world, and they lose much of their real character by sinful and vain associations. But even then they seem to act as a soothing and efficacious remedy, like the essence which, though hidden in the admixture of useless ingredients, still reveals its valuable properties often unknown to the recipient. They tell to the unwary soul a tale of higher things ; they utter accents, and breathe combinations, unheard among the realities of life. They say not whence they come, yet when the distance has been measured, they are beside the strait gate, and beckon of former acquaintance. “ The delights of the ear,” might St. German say with St. Augustine, “ had firmly entangled and

<sup>1</sup> Confess. Oxf. Transl. p. 214, 215.    <sup>2</sup> See ch. vi.    <sup>3</sup> p. 205.

subdued me ; but Thou didst loosen and free me. Now in those melodies which Thy words breathe soul into, when sung with a sweet and attuned voice, I do a little repose ; yet not so as to be held thereby, but that I can disengage myself when I will. But with the words which are their life, and whereby they find admission into me, themselves seek in my affections a place of some estimation, and I can scarcely assign them one suitable. For at one time I seem to myself to give them more honour than is seemly, feeling our minds to be more holily and fervently raised unto a flame of devotion, by the holy words themselves, when thus sung, than when not ; and that the several affections of our spirit, by a sweet variety, have their own proper measures in the voice and singing, by some hidden correspondence wherewith they are stirred up. But this contentment of the flesh, to which the soul must not be given over to be enervated, doth oft beguile me, the sense not so waiting upon reason, as patiently to follow her ; but having been admitted merely for her sake, it strives even to run before her, and leave her. Thus, in these things I unawares sin, but afterwards am aware of it.”<sup>1</sup>

III. Language is so moulded upon the fashions and customs of the world, that it appears often awkward, and even profane, to introduce some of its expressions into serious subjects. Of this kind is the word *literary*, which, as the usage of the day directs, seems very inappropriate to hagiology ; and yet we are at a loss to find any equivalent term which may convey the idea intended, without doing injury to clearness and simplicity. However, as religious men

<sup>1</sup> p. 210.

have used such expressions as "Sacred Literature," on the highest of all subjects, the same liberty may perhaps here be excused, on a lower field of consideration. It should seem, then, that Saints may be divided into two classes ;—literary Saints, and Saints not literary. Under the latter St. German ought to be ranked. Saints are seldom illiterate, which is different from not being literary ; accession of knowledge is almost identical with growth in piety ; and whether it be derived through books, or oral instruction, or meditation, it is almost invariably in some degree connected with holiness. It is supposed that this fact is very evident throughout the middle ages. Nothing could sometimes exceed the ignorance of men of the world, kings, barons, knights, and the retinue of courts ; but monasteries, which then was a convertible term with abodes of religion, were very generally the seats of learning. The village which claimed the Abbot for its feudal suzerain was, doubtless, better instructed than that which lay at the foot of the baron's castle, nay, perhaps than the castle itself. These were two distinct currents passing along from generation to generation ; the one carrying down to posterity an accumulated treasure of knowledge, the other stranding an uncouth conglomeration of heterogeneous gatherings. Here were the Four Faculties of the human soul said to have been defined and explained, by Anselm, the Abbot of Bec,<sup>1</sup> Passion or Propension, Will, Reason, Intellect ; a Book of Sentences ; a Sum of Theology ; the Bible. There were duels, witchcraft, gambling, point of honour, patronage, game laws, primogeniture, investitures, vassallage, constitutions. Knowledge is a

<sup>1</sup> Vita Guiberti Noving. lib. i. ch. xvii.

toy with the world ; they take it up or they throw it down as they please. The world is sometimes very learned, nay, it sometimes tosses higher than religion, or at least the umpires say so. But knowledge is the habitual food of the godly ; it is healthy because, it is more equable ; it is digested all, because it is well proportioned to the want ; and the godly have none of those phrenzies which an intemperate feast of learning will produce. Still Saints need not be literary, any more than they need be noble by birth, which has sometimes been supposed of the Saints of certain ages. An occasional writing, called forth by particular circumstances, or documents composed in the course of study, merely to impress things on the memory, and to serve for the instruction of others, do not constitute a literary person. St. German apparently was thus situated. He was deeply learned, and was the teacher of great men. He may have written and been read. Yet he certainly was not a literary character. His merits are never in ancient records connected with this qualification. No one appealed to his writings, though many came to consult him in person. At present, there is a vague notion that writing is the great means of commanding respect, and claiming a title to wisdom and judgment. In the primitive ages, it seems men took a higher view of wisdom ; they did not confound, as we do, the faculty or the instrument, with the substance. It was not necessary for things to be explicitly striking, to be intrinsically valuable. A general tone, a habit, a consistency of speech and action, proclaimed the Christian wisdom, more than a power of analysis, a perception of analogies, and a command of rhetorical resources. Can we doubt that a St. Polycarp would deserve confidence where a Tertullian might be distrusted ? What

was that divine unction which filled the speech of the blind Saint at Tyre, while he quoted and applied the Holy Scriptures from memory, in the presence of the assembled multitude, and which so thrilled the heart of the historian, that he became eloquent in spite of himself? Surely this was something in itself higher and more authoritative than the mere talent of writing, though it has often been combined with it. But so it is; those on whom the choicest favours of God seem to be bestowed are often unskilled in the arts of composition, or even in the more general modes of communicating their thoughts. A superficial observer may pass by, and assume that diffidence is incapacity. But those that have been near, may have remarked a wonderful clear-sightedness, a facility in receiving knowledge, an elevation of thought, a power of distinguishing perversion from truth, an instinctive sense of the leaven of heresy, and a sympathetic discernment of what is orthodox, moral and holy, which have filled them with confusion at their own acute dulness and logical shallowness. They seemed to aim at nothing but God's will, and yet all came. They seemed too humble to seek to influence others, yet doubtless they did influence them already, and would hereafter be prepared for any exertion which it should please their Divine Master to order. Is it not these that really lead the better part of mankind? Are they not the true incense of the Church, while the more brilliant are but the showy censer which distributes their fragrance?

This is a consideration which applies in a special manner to St. German, and at the same time explains how, after his death, the particular character of his mind would have been forgotten or lost in a general renown for wisdom and sanctity, and amid

the more sensible and immediate tokens of his former life, as displayed by the miracles which survived him. For indeed writers have this privilege among many others, that they obtain a definite existence in the mind of posterity. There is a famous expression of Sidonius Apollinaris, which, as it may not be passed over in any life of St. German, furnishes also an apposite illustration of the foregoing remarks. St. Prosper of Orleans had requested him to celebrate the praises of St. Anian, who has been introduced to the reader in the preceding narrative. He writes back : " You desire me to extol the glory of the blessed Anian, that most eminent and perfect bishop, *equal to Lupus, and not unequal to German* ; you wish that the minds of the faithful may be impressed with the practice, virtues, and gifts of so great a saint.....know then that I had begun to write." It will be remarked that a kind of superiority due to St. German seems here to be implied ; since a Saint might be equal to St. Lupus, yet still unequal to St. German. But the passage is rather quoted for another purpose, namely, to indicate what might be considered the three types of a Saint in the fifth century in Gaul. And it is observable that none of these come under the denomination of literary men. There are indeed two letters of St. Lupus extant, which, beside many other proofs, evince his superior attainments. Yet neither he, nor St. Anian, nor St. German, owe their reputation to any written productions. Their merits had something of a sacramental nature, which begat awe and silent reverence, and perhaps it would have been almost a lowering of their exalted position, had they moved in the ranks of Saints and Authors. To understand which we have but to consider, how painful to serious minds is the literary light, so to say,



in which Paley, in his otherwise able work on St. Paul's Epistles, places the inspired writings of that Apostle. It is also conceivable that many may have been deterred from reading Lowth's Book on the Prophets, from the very object which it professes to aim at. And is it not a fact, that the higher we ascend in the contemplation of the different orders of intelligences, the less we expect as by instinct any of those symbols or modes of external influence, which we connect with associations of an inferior and more earthly character? The Apostles did write, yet we dare not call theirs writing in the ordinary sense. The Blessed Virgin on the other hand did not write; we think indeed we discover a passage or two of Holy Scripture dictated by her, and perceive her influence presiding over much more; yet she must needs have another as the medium of her thoughts. But further still, if we may reverently appeal higher, in the person of our divine Lord, so immeasurably above all that is man, though both Man and God, do we not think that it implies something derogatory to His nature, to attribute to Him the use of any such channel of communication? Is there not a silence and a mystery which encircles Him and those nearest to Him, incompatible with certain manifestations? And does not the famous letter to King Abgarus fail to commend itself in some respects from this very circumstance? One among many instances of this veil thrown over the Humanity of our blessed Lord, is the fact that no personal description has been left of Him, that depends upon any higher authority than vague and uncertain traditions. And then how little is known of those with whom this His Humanity was especially connected; His mother, St. Mary Magdalen, to whom He appeared first after the

Resurrection, St. John who lay on His breast ! We know a great deal more about St. Paul, than St. Peter ; St. Paul saw the Lord in visions, St. Peter face to face. And there was perhaps a propriety arising from this same cause, in that St. Peter's preserved Epistles are general, while those of St. Paul are also often private. Now if this be true, it is certainly remarkable that with an authentic and somewhat circumstantial account of St. German's life extant, yet there should be a similar mystery spread over his character. It has been already observed, that no definite description has been left by Constantius, either of his outward appearance or of his particular disposition and tone of mind ; nor has a single sentence of any writing of his come down to posterity ; nay, but very shortly after his death, it should seem nothing of the kind was forthcoming, though at the same time he was known to have possessed all the qualifications requisite. And what brings the parallel of his life with that of His divine Master still nearer, even the very facts of his career on earth were being obscured in the wonderful and miraculous consequences which followed upon his death ; so that he also needed one that had "perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto Christian people in order, that they might know the certainty of those things wherein they had been instructed."

If then we were to compare St. German with any Saints which had preceded him, we should not in a general aspect liken him to any of the Saints who sustained a literary fame, but rather with those sublime, unearthly types, whose best description is, that they were mystic roses from the Holy Wood that budded, the fragrance of which spread far and wide, which yet none could embody into ostensible form ; which lasted

ever the same, though none knew how it passed on from generation—a St. Lawrence, a St. Nicolas, a St. Anthony, a St. Martin ! And there are more reasons than this which seem to point out especially the second of the Saints just mentioned, St. Nicolas, as a just subject of comparison, as will be seen by the following extract from the Roman Breviary. “ St. Nicolas having devoted his whole soul to God, undertook a journey to Palestine, in order to visit the holy places, and manifest his veneration on the spot. When he had taken ship, though it was fair weather and the sea was quiet, he foretold to the sailors a dreadful tempest. The tempest came, and the passengers were all in extreme danger, but Nicolas prayed, and the tempest by miracle was assuaged. He returned home to Patara, in Lycia, after this journey, and gave the example of the most singular holiness. By divine admonition he then came to Myra, which was the metropolis of Lycia. Just at that time the Bishop of the city had died, and the provincial Bishops were consulting about the election of a successor. They also had received a divine intimation, urging them to elect the first who on the morrow should enter the Church in the morning and be called Nicolas. They did not disregard the command, and Nicolas was found on the morrow passing the doors of the Church, and with the consent of all was created Bishop of Myra. In his Episcopate he preserved that chastity which he had always maintained, and was noted for his wisdom, the frequency of his prayers, his vigils, abstinence, liberality and hospitality, his mildness in exhorting, and his severity in reproof.”

## ERRATA.

### Page

- 52 line 26, for *ashes*, read *wood-ashes*.  
54 note, after *silice*, read *or cinere*.  
59 line 12, for *six Bishops*, read *seven Bishops*.  
61 lines 25 and 30, for *Marmontier*, read *Marmoutier*.  
93 line 17, for *Vignornia*, read *Vigornia*.  
95 line 9, for *beateous*, read *beauteous*.  
97 note, for *Valerius*, read *Valesius*.  
117 line 15, in some copies, for *præponerit*, read *præponeret*.  
119 line 18, in some copies, for *St. Jerome*, read *St. Sulpitius*.  
119 line 19, for *we know*, read *we learn*.  
126 line 30, in some copies, for *Pelagius the Bishop*, read *Palladius the Bishop*.  
132 note, for *Mang*, read *Maug*.  
132 note, for *Vaticam*, read *Vatican*.  
153 line 30, for *in the present occasion*, read *on the present occasion*.  
159 line 26, for *in that account*, read *on that account*.

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**Henry Mozley and Sons, Printers, Derby.**

THE LIFE  
OF  
ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY,  
APOSTLE OF THE ENGLISH.

WITH  
*Some Account of the Early British Church.*

MANSUETI HEREDITABUNT TERRAM, ET DELECTABUNTUR IN  
MULTITUDINE PACIS.

*Part 2.*

LONDON:  
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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE author is sorry that illness and other similar causes have obliged him to delay the publication of the Second Part of this Life very much indeed beyond the time at which he had hoped that it might have appeared.

He ought, perhaps, to add likewise, that it has been in part written under circumstances of a public and private nature, more or less disadvantageous towards the calm thought and continuous attention which are due to a subject so solemn as the Life of a Saint.

He takes this opportunity of expressing his thanks to a writer in the *Christian Remembrancer* of July last, as well for the kind and considerate tone of his criticisms upon the former portion of this Life, as for his observations upon one or two historical matters, which the author will not fail to reconsider and re-examine in the event of another edition of the Life being published.

While the sheets are passing through the press, the Librarian of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, has obligingly mentioned that in the Library of that Society are contained two manuscripts of the Gospels, said to have been sent by St. Gregory to St. Augustine, which the author regrets that time does not allow him to investigate. He has just heard also that there is a similar MS. in the Bodleian, which had escaped the



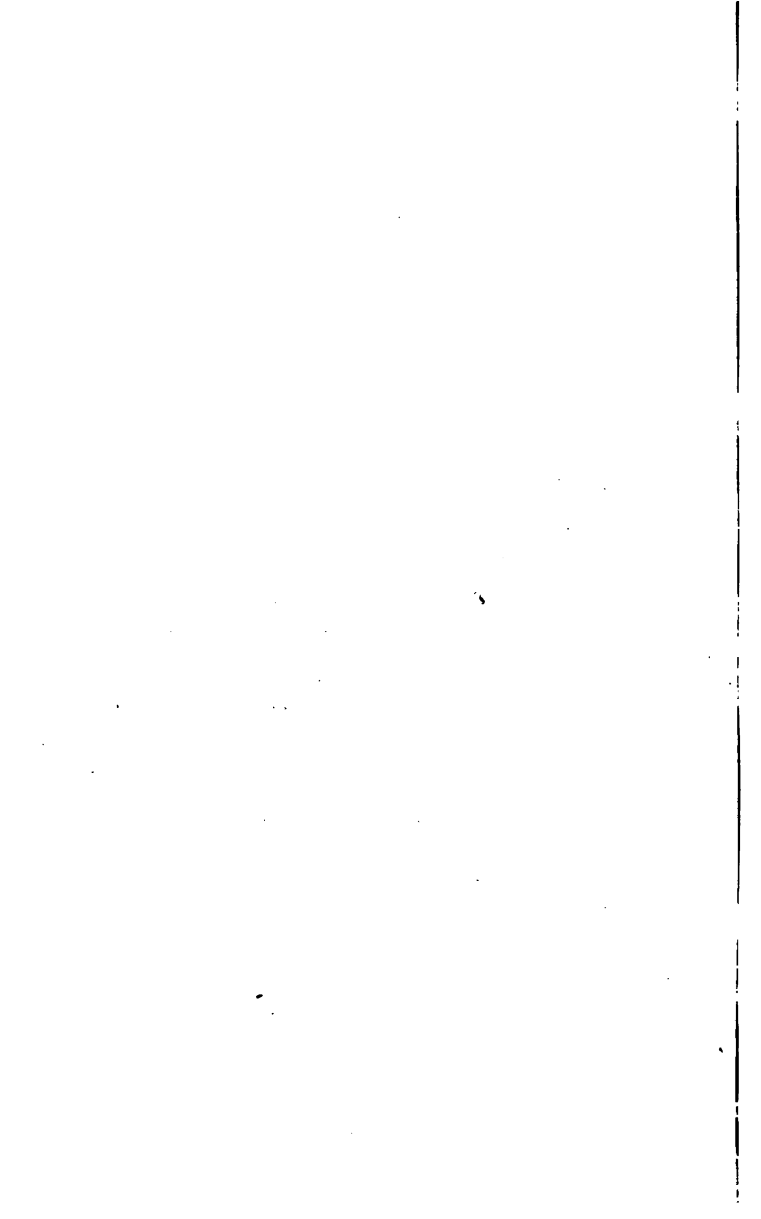
notice of the kind friend to whose researches in that library he is so much indebted.

The pressure under which this Part of the Life of St. Augustine has been necessarily completed, must also be urged as an apology for the omission of all minute reference to Gocelin's Narrative of his Translation. As that Treatise, however, extends to St. Augustine's immediate successors in the See of Canterbury, an opportunity of supplying the omission may, it is hoped, present itself in a future Number of the Series.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

## MISSION OF ST. MELLITUS AND HIS COMPANIONS.

THE chronology of the epoch to which these pages relate is not a little perplexed ; but the following arrangement of events according to dates, which is taken from Alford, will perhaps, be found sufficiently exact for the purposes of the present sketch. St. Augustine and his brethren arrived in England in the spring of 596, in the midst of the Paschal Alleluias. King Ethelbert and others were admitted into the Church by baptism at Pentecost of the same year ; soon after which St. Augustine repaired to Arles for consecration, which he received on November 17. He returned to England in 598, at the Christmas of which year, or rather early in the January of 599, took place the baptism of the 10,000 converts, mentioned in St. Gregory's letter to Eulogius.<sup>1</sup> In the same year, 599, St. Augustine dispatched messengers to Rome, the very messengers, probably, from whom St. Gregory derived his information on the prosperous state of the English mission.<sup>2</sup> These

<sup>1</sup> Vid. p. 111. This letter was written in the summer of 599, and speaks of the baptism of the 10,000 converts, as having taken place at Christmas of the current (first) year of the Indiction, which began in September 598.

<sup>2</sup> St. Bede, however, says that the messengers were sent immediately (continuo) on St. Augustine's return from Arles ; but this,

were Laurence, a presbyter, and St. Augustine's successor in the See of Canterbury; and Peter, a monk, afterwards the first abbot of St. Augustine's monastery. The objects of this embassy were, among others, first, to report the progress of the mission, secondly, to ask for additional missionaries, and, thirdly, to obtain the judgment of the Apostolic See upon certain difficult questions to which the anomalous circumstances of the Church in England had given, or were likely to give, occasion. These questions, with their several answers, shall form the subject of the next chapter.

The delegates continued two full years at Rome; and at length, in 601, came back to England with a reinforcement of twelve missionaries, the chief of whom were, Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Ruffinianus. Of these, the three former were afterwards raised to the Episcopate, and attained the glories of sanctity. St. Mellitus was the first Bishop of London, St. Justus the first Bishop of Rochester, and St. Paulinus the first Archbishop of York. Of the fourth, Ruffinianus, we know only that he was one of the earlier among the Abbots of St. Augustine's.

The new missionaries were charged, like their predecessors, with letters commendatory to the prelates and sovereign princes of that portion of France through which they were to pass. To each of the Bishops of Toulon, Marseilles, Châlons, Metz, Paris, Rouen, and Angers, St. Gregory wrote as follows :

perhaps, refers to the intention of sending them, or the preparation for their journey. They certainly did not return to England till 601, and it does not appear why they should have remained at Rome three years, or even more, if we follow those who consider that the baptism of the 10,000 took place in 597, and that St. Augustine had then returned from Arles.

GREGORY TO MENNAS OF TOULON, SERENUS OF MARSEILLES, LUPUS OF CHALONS, AIGULFUS OF METZ, SIMPLICIUS OF PARIS, MELANTIUS OF ROUEN, AND LICINIUS,<sup>3</sup> BISHOPS OF THE FRANKS. *A copy to each.*

“ALTHOUGH the charge of your office is a warning to your Fraternity that you ought with all your power to give your assistance to religious men, particularly where they are labouring in the cause of souls ; yet it is not useless for your anxiety to be urged by the address of our letters ; for as a fire is increased by the wind, so the zeal of an honest mind is promoted by exhortation. Since, then, by the grace of our Redeemer, so great a multitude of the English nation is converted to the Christian Faith, that our most reverend common brother and fellow-bishop Augustine, declares that those who are with him cannot sufficiently carry out this work in every different place, we have provided for sending to him some monks with our much beloved and common sons, Laurence, the Presbyter, and Mellitus, Abbot. And, therefore, I beg your Fraternity to shew them such love as is becoming, and readily to aid them wherever it may be necessary ; that so by your assistance they may have no reason for delay, and may receive joy and refreshment by means of the comfort which you will give them, and that you by shewing them kindness, may render yourselves partners in the cause, for which they are engaged.”<sup>4</sup>

With this was joined a letter to Clotaire, who reigned over the provinces of Austrasia, Neustria, and Burgundy.

<sup>3</sup> The see of Licinius was Angers.

<sup>4</sup> St. Greg. Ep. xi. 58.

GREGORY TO CLOTAIRE, KING OF THE FRANKS.<sup>6</sup>

"AMIDST the many cares and anxieties which you undergo in governing the nations which are subject to you, that you should aid those who are labouring in the cause of God, is a subject of singular praise, and will bring upon you a high reward. And since by your previous good acts you have proved yourself such that we may presume still better things of you, we are most gladly urged to beg of you what will redound to your recompense. Some of those who went with our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop, Augustine, to the English nation, told us on their return, with what charity your Excellence had refreshed our said brother during his stay with you, and how you had succoured and assisted him on his way. But since their works are ever pleasing to our God, who do not turn back from the good which they have begun, we greet you with our fatherly affection, and beg of you to consider the Monks, the bearers of these presents, whom we have sent to our before-mentioned brother, together with our well-beloved sons, Laurence, Presbyter, and Mellitus, Abbot, as especially commended to you. And whatever kindness you shewed before to him, bestow more abundantly upon them also, and thus increase the amount of your praise ;

<sup>6</sup> Clotaire, the younger, was son of Chilperic, grandson of Clotaire the elder, and great-grandson of Clovis. He became king at four years of age, on the murder of his father. He was first cousin of Childebert, son and successor of Sigebert, and by him and his sons Theoderic and Theodebert (of whom before) was attacked, defeated, and stripped of a great part of his dominions ; so that for a long time he reigned in a part of Neustria alone. But after the death of Theoderic and Theodebert and their grandmother, Brunehault, he gained a great victory over their sons and became monarch of the three provinces of Austrasia, Neustria, and Burgundy.

that so, whilst by the help of your assistance they accomplish the journey upon which they have entered, Almighty God may recompense you for your good deeds, being your Guardian in prosperity and your Help under adversity."<sup>6</sup>

St. Gregory wrote also to Brunehault, the queen-regent, thanking her for her hospitable reception of St. Augustine on his passage through France four years before, and craving the like protection in behalf of the new missionaries.

GREGORY TO BRUNEAULT, QUEEN OF THE FRANKS.

"WE render thanks to Almighty God, who, amongst other gifts of His loving kindness which He has bestowed upon your Excellence, has so filled you with love for the Christian religion, that whatever you know tends to the good of souls and propagation of the Faith, you cease not to labour therein with devout and pious zeal. But with what kindness and aid your Excellence assisted our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop, Augustine, on his way to the English nation, report was not silent, and afterwards some monks on their return from him to us, related the matter in detail. This Christian conduct of yours may be a subject of wonder to others, who are, as yet, less familiarly acquainted with your good deeds; but to us, who are already familiar with them by experience, they are not so much a subject of wonder as of joy, because, hereby, in all that you bestow on others you assist yourself. What great miracles then our Redeemer has wrought in the conversion of the above-mentioned nation, is already known to your Excellence<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> St. Greg. Ep. xi. 61.

<sup>7</sup> St. Augustine may have brought the tidings to Queen Brunehault, at Chalons, on his way to Arles for his consecration.



And this ought to be a subject of great joy to you, since the comfort which you have afforded claims for you a share in the event, inasmuch as it was by your assistance, after God, that the word of preaching was then made known. For whoever assists another's good work, makes it his own. But that the fruit of your reward may be more and more abundant, we beg of you kindly to extend the aid of your countenance to the monks, the bearers of these presents, whom we have sent with our well-beloved sons Laurence, the Presbyter, and Mellitus, Abbot, to our before-mentioned most reverend brother and fellow-bishop, (since he tells us that those who are with him cannot sufficiently assist him,) and that you would deign to aid them in every thing: that so, whilst the good beginnings of your Excellence are followed by still better, and they are prevented meeting with any delay or difficulty, you may move the mercy of our God towards yourself and your grandsons, who are so dear to us, in proportion as you shew yourself merciful for the love of Him in cases of this kind<sup>a</sup>.

With these letters were included others, to Desiderius, Virgilius, Ætherius, and Arigius, Bishops, respectively, of Vienne, Arles, Lyons, and Gap in Dauphiny. The Pope wrote also to the two young sovereign princes, Theoderic and Theodebert, in nearly the same terms as to their grandmother, queen Brunehault.

No particulars of the journey have come down to us; it lay through the same line of country which, four years before, had been illustrated by the progress of St. Augustine himself, and the sees were, generally, filled by the same occupants as on the previous occasion. Laurence and Peter, too, who were of the party, had

<sup>a</sup> St. Greg. Ep. xi. 62.

been in the number of St. Augustine's companions. How many thoughts of sweet remembrance, how many topics of edifying speech must the *admonitus locorum* have awakened! "Here we prayed for England; here we almost fainted on our way; here our venerable father cheered our drooping spirits by this exhortation; here he struck awe among the beholders by that miracle." What pleasant recognitions, too, and mutual good offices, and interchanges of congratulation between the hospitable prelates and the representatives of the original mission! what questions about England, heathen and Christian, what rejoicing in its blessedness, what anticipation of its prospects!

By the hands of the new missionaries, the holy father sent all things necessary for the more solemn and edifying celebration of Divine worship; such as, "sacred vessels, altar-plate, and altar-coverings, ornaments for the Church, priestly and other clerical vestments, many relics of apostles and martyrs," (among which are believed to have been some of St. Peter and St. Paul, the tutelaries of the new metropolitan Church), "and a quantity of books<sup>9</sup>."

When Christianity was first introduced, it made its way without the advantage of those exterior embellishments which came with its advance. It "travelled in the greatness" of its "own strength." First, it vanquished the world, in part, with weapons of its own celestial temper; next, it spoiled the vanquished of their arms, theirs by long possession indeed, yet not of inherent right; and thus, having "made the creature its weapon," it proceeded on its march of conquest. Was it not indeed thus? Noble architecture, impressive pictures, thrilling music, glorious ceremonial; these were of later

<sup>9</sup> S. Bede, H. E. i. 29.

growth and less native origin. The earliest Christian Church was an attic, the first baptisteries, way-side pools, St. Paul and St. Silvanus sang their nocturns in a dungeon. And yet, withal, "mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed," till, at length, the Church awoke, like her Lord before her, from the tomb, and put on her strength, yea, "put on her beautiful garments." The order of her triumphs was the same here in England as in the world at large. She won her way by miracle, and kept her ground through sanctity, the outward and inward tokens of the Holy Ghost. Not until her foundations were laid deep and broad, did the great Master Builder see fit to rear the august superstructure and elaborate the curious details. Not less acceptable was the offering of the Adorable Sacrifice in St. Martin's or St. Pancras, though there were, as yet, no long-drawn aisles to give scope for stately processions, nor spacious courts to receive and circulate the undulations of holy psalmody—than, at a later time, when à Becket sang Mass, with all the means and appliances of solemn worship, in Lanfranc's goodly pile. Not, of course, that the infant Church of Saxon England was ever, even in its rudest state, any more than the Church of the Apostles, neglectful of those external proprieties which are as the beaming features of the Church's inward soul, significant of her beauty, and radiant with love. Liturgical writers have taught that the majestic forms and delicate proprieties of ceremonial were observed, as far as circumstances permitted, even in the days of the Apostles; and that ere, as yet, the world suffered the Church to do what she would have wished, the Church was yet fain, with loving Magdalene, to do what she could. And the solemn processions, the sacred insignia, the entoned litanies, the illuminated sanctuaries, of which we read as concomitant

with the earliest steps of the Church on its revival in our own country, are indicative, surely, of the like pious disposition. Still the general assertion remains untouched, that the Church gained hearts and consciences on her side before she disclosed herself in all the attributes of outward pomp and beauty; and this, both in the world at large, and specially in England. Let not such lessons be thrown away on those among ourselves to whom may seem to have been allotted a work not wholly dissimilar from that of our first missionaries. Let us not begin at the wrong end, by studying the forms of the sanctuary before the science of the Saints; but rather let us understand that outward beauty is the development of true piety, not its compensation. On the other hand, let us not be led by any fear of one extreme, to even so much as an apparent closing with its opposite, which, if men would but bear in mind the true nature and right place of religious ceremonial, must be accounted hardly a less pernicious one. That innate sense of the graceful and majestic, for why is it implanted by God, but that it may exercise itself upon His works, whether of nature or of grace? Those precious offerings of earth, those marvellous ingenuities of man, shall they be exhausted on this sorry world, to perish "with the using," yea, (must it not be said?) and too often "with the users"? That were surely to feign, with heretics of old, that creation is the work of some spirit of evil, radically and hopelessly corrupt, not the gift of our gracious Lord, which He made "very good," and which the Holy Ghost has re-made, in His Church, more glorious than at the first, even filling the whole world with His illustrious and Life-giving Presence, and so "making new the face of the earth."

## CHAPTER XV.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

ONE of the first objects of St. Augustine, upon his return from Arles, was, as stated in the former Chapter, to obtain from Rome a series of authoritative directions for the ordering of the English Church.

A modern objector has ventured upon ascribing this desire to a discreditable want of learning ; yet, not to speak of St. Gregory's own testimony to his high qualifications in this respect,<sup>1</sup> nothing, surely, could be more natural than that a solitary bishop, in a distant land, and that a land but recently in any degree, and still but in part, reclaimed from the enormities of a dark and cruel superstition, should seek a solution of the many ecclesiastical problems to which the anomalies of the case would continually give rise ; and should apply for it to the quarter to which all the feelings of duty prompted him, and all the sanctions of precedent required him, to look up with reverence and submission. Some of the following inquiries will be seen to refer directly to the case of an infant Church, others to local peculiarities of the Church in England, and all of them to bear upon subjects more or less incidental to St. Augustine's peculiar position.

The first Question submitted by the new Archbishop to the judgment of the Holy See, related to the manner

<sup>1</sup> Vid. *infra*, p. 174.

in which bishops should live among their clergy, and the several objects for which, and proportions in which, the offerings of the faithful are to be distributed.

The former part of this Question St. Gregory answers by reminding the Archbishop of the different Scripture passages bearing upon the conduct and deportment of those whom God sets over His heritage ; and more especially of the instructions to bishops contained in the Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy. He farther recommends under the actual circumstances of the English Church, that the bishops and clergy should live together, as in the primitive age ; partaking of their meals at the same table, and throwing their property into a common stock. In other words, they were to conform precisely to the rules of monastic discipline ; “ in which ” says St. Gregory to the Archbishop, “ your Fraternity is well versed.”<sup>2</sup> So it is, indeed, that the words in the Acts of the Apostles which depict the life and conversation of the first Christians might be taken for the description of a monastic society. “ The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul ; neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common.”<sup>3</sup> It is sometimes asked, where, in later times, has this primitive type been fulfilled ? And certain separatists have tried, with more zeal than knowledge, to restore the life of the earliest Christians by abrupt, violent, and, therefore, unlawful methods. But, in truth, the question of the one class has been practically answered, and the attempts of the other anticipated and superseded, by an institution which has subsisted in regular form throughout all ages of the Church.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also S. Greg. ep. xi. 66.

<sup>3</sup> Acts iv. 32.

To return to St. Gregory's Reply. With respect to the distribution of offerings, he writes: "It is the practice of the Apostolic See to deliver instructions to bishops at their consecration, to the effect, that every payment which accrues is to be divided into four portions; one, for the Bishop and his household, towards the discharge of the duties of hospitality and reception; one for the clergy; the third for the poor; the fourth for the repair of the fabrics."<sup>4</sup>

As to such "clerks, not being in holy orders, as had not the gift of continence,"<sup>5</sup> the Pope determines that "they should be allowed to marry, and receive their stipend at their own houses." For "of the primitive Christians" he adds, "it is recorded, that 'distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.'"<sup>6</sup> With respect to their stipend, he recommends "care and circumspection," and that they should be "bound by ecclesiastical rule to observe a strict conversation, and pay attention to divine psalmody, keeping their hearts and tongues and bodies, by God's help, clear of all irregularity."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Vide other instances in which this quadripartite division is enjoined in St. Gregory's Epistles, viz. lib. iv. ep. 11, lib. v. ep. 44, lib. viii. ep. 7, lib. xiii. ep. 44.

<sup>5</sup> In the Benedictine edition of St. Gregory's works, this forms the answer to a separate Question, the second in order, viz. "An clerici continere non valentes, possint contrahere, et, si contraxerint, an debeat ad seculum redire?"

<sup>6</sup> Acts iv. 35.

<sup>7</sup> Bishops, Priests, and Deacons were obliged to a single life from very early times. (Vid. a full note to the Oxford translation of Fleury's Ecclesiastical History, Book xix. c. 22.) Pope St. Leo, (A.D. 446) extended the rule to sub-deacons, who, however, in Sicily, were not included till the time of St. Gregory the Great, A.D. 590. (Lib. i. ep. 44.) Those whom St. Gregory here allows to marry are Clerici, i. e.

To those who were to live in community, he judges it less needful to speak of "equitable distribution, and the duties of hospitality and mercy, seeing it is plain, that all superfluity is to be expended in the service of religion and godliness, according to our Lord's precept, 'Give alms of such things as ye have, and, behold, all things are clean unto you.'<sup>8</sup>

The Second, or, as it is in some copies, the Third, Question, bore upon the ritual of religion. St. Augustine during his stay in France, had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the Gallican Missal, which differed from the Roman in several respects. It had been set in order by St. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, in the 4th, and Sidonius, Bishop of Auvergne, and Musæus, in the 5th centuries, and continued distinct from the Roman till the time of Charlemagne.<sup>9</sup> St. Augustine was impressed by the fact of this discrepancy of rite in nations which were members of the same Church, and submitted his difficulties in the following words :

"Seeing that there is but one Faith, why do the customs of Churches vary, so that one Order for the Mass prevails in the Roman Church, and another in that of France?"<sup>1</sup>

St. Gregory's reply was as follows :

"Your Fraternity is familiar with the practice of the Roman Church, in which, as you well know, you were brought up. But if you have found what may be more acceptable to Almighty God, whether in the Roman, French, or any other Church, I would have you carefully select and introduce, as by special ap-

the "clerks," of the lower orders, including, probably, the sub-deacons. Vid. Ducange, Glossar. "Clericus."

<sup>8</sup> St. Luke xi. 41.

<sup>9</sup> Vid. Palmer's Orig. Liturg.

<sup>1</sup> This is the reading of the Benedictine editors.



pointment, into the English Church (which is as yet but young in the Faith) what you have thus been able to cull from many Churches. Things are not to be loved for the places where they are found, but rather places for the good things which they possess. Choose, therefore, from each Church whatever is devout, religious, and right ; form them into a single collection, and lodge them in the minds of the English, for the use of the Church."

It does not appear that the Archbishop availed himself of this permission. The original service-books of the Anglo-Saxon Church were, probably, a mere transcript of the Sacramentary of St. Gregory, into which local variations were by degrees introduced under the sanction of the bishops of certain dioceses. Hence, the well-known "Uses" of York, Sarum, Hereford, Bangor, Lincoln, Aberdeen, &c. After the Council of Trent, in the Pontificate of Pius V., an uniform rite was established in the Churches of the Roman obedience, excepting such as could plead the use of other forms of service for upwards of two centuries. England, had it come under the operation of that decree, would have formed one of the exceptions.

St. Augustine's next question was as follows : "What punishment is to be inflicted on one who commits theft in a Church ?"

St. Gregory, in reply, advises a distinction of punishment according to the circumstances of the culprit. In the case of wealthier offenders, he proposes the confiscation of goods ; the poorer, he would have punished with stripes, more or fewer, according to the amount of guilt. But where severer measures are adopted, all, he says, should be done in charity, nought in anger ; since it is the object of punishments not to satisfy the vindictive feelings of the injured party, but to correct the offender,

and anticipate the sufferings of another life. "For we ought," adds the holy Pontiff, "to exercise discipline towards the faithful, as good fathers are wont to do towards their children after the flesh, whom they beat for their faults, and yet design to appoint their heirs at the very time when they are thus painfully chastising them ; thus reserving their goods for those whom they seem to be chiding in anger. This charity, then, should be ever observed, and should regulate the measure of correction, that so the mind may do nothing whatever without the rule of reason. You shall add, also, how they are to make restoration for what they have stolen out of a church : but God forbid that the Church should receive with increase what she appears to lose of earthly possessions, or seek to make a gain of the things of vanity."

The next questions of the Archbishop refer to the case of marriage between kindred and connections. First, as to the marriage of two brothers with two sisters not nearly related to them.

"Against this," answers the Pope, "there is no law of God, and we allow it by all means."

Secondly, "Within what degree of affinity may the faithful contract marriages with relatives? And may marriages be lawfully undertaken with a step-mother, or with a brother's wife?"

Upon the former point, St. Gregory replies with a special reference to the circumstances of the English Church. The prohibition, anciently extended to the seventh degree of relationship ; but at the Lateran Council, under Pope Innocent III., it was reduced to the fourth. In consideration, however, of the peculiar circumstances which suggested a reason for the utmost indulgence towards England, St. Gregory so far relaxes the rule as to

sanction marriages between third cousins.<sup>2</sup> His answer is as follows :

“There is a merely political enactment of the Roman state, which allows the marriage of first cousins, whether the son and daughter of brother and sister, or of two own brothers, or of two own sisters. But we have learned by experience, that children never thrive which are the issue of such alliances ; and in the case of a brother’s wife, the Law of God forbids it.<sup>3</sup> It follows, therefore, that the faithful should not be allowed to marry within the third or fourth degree of consanguinity ; within the second, as I have said, they ought by all means to abstain. But to marry a father’s second wife is a great crime ; for it is expressly written in the Law, ‘*Turpitudinem patris tui non discooperies.*’<sup>4</sup> But since it is written, ‘they shall be one flesh ;’<sup>5</sup> whoever shall presume to break this law in the case of a father’s wife, has, in fact, broken it in the case of a father. It is also forbidden that a person marry a brother’s wife, since, by her former marriage, she had become one flesh with his brother. And in this cause it was that John Baptist was beheaded, and perfected by holy martyrdom ; for, though he was not required to deny Christ, yet for confessing Christ was he slain. For, since our Lord Jesus Christ had said, ‘I am the Truth,’ and it was for the Truth that St. John was put to death, he did truly shed his blood for Christ.

“Since, however, many among the English are reported to have already contracted such wicked marriages, let them be admonished, on coming to the Faith, to keep continence, and to recognize this as a grievous sin. Let them fear the terrible judgment of God, lest, for their

<sup>2</sup> *Quartâ progenie conjuncti.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ib. xviii. 7.*

<sup>3</sup> *Lev. xviii. 16.*

<sup>5</sup> *Gen. ii. 24.*

carnal affection, they incur the torments of eternal punishment. They are not, however, on this account to be deprived of the communion of our Lord's sacred Body and Blood ; that sins committed by them, through ignorance, before the laver of Baptism, may not seem to be visited upon them. For, at such times, some things Holy Church corrects with zeal, some she tolerates in gentleness, some she winks at in tenderness, and so bears and dissembles, as frequently by this means to check the evil which she opposes. But let all who come to the Faith be admonished not to venture upon committing any such sin. And should any (after admonition) be guilty of so doing, let them be deprived of the communion of our Lord's Body and Blood ; for, as in the case of those who have acted through ignorance, the fault is entitled to a certain amount of indulgence, so is it to be strongly followed up with punishment in the case of those who are not afraid to sin with knowledge."

It is not quite clear whether St. Gregory's permission of marriages between third cousins were prospective as well as retrospective ; possibly it may have gone merely against the separation of those who, being thus nearly related, were united in marriage at the time when they joined the Church. Even this amount of indulgence, however, gave umbrage in some parts of Christendom, as we learn from a letter of Felix, bishop of Messina, who, upon hearing of the allowance granted to the English Church, addressed a letter of respectful and affectionate expostulation to the Roman Pontiff. The language, indeed, of profound reverence and submission with which the holy Bishop introduces and tempers his objections, is a token no less of the deference paid in early times to the judgment of the Apostolic See, than of the high

estimation in which the reigning Pontiff was held by the contemporary prelates of Christendom. The letter is so interesting, indeed, in many points of view, that although but in part only applicable to the immediate subject, it has been thought well to give it almost entire.

FELIX, BISHOP OF MESSINA, TO GREGORY.

“ To the most blessed and honoured Lord, and holy Father, Gregory, Pope, Felix, of his love towards your health and holiness, sends greeting.

“ The laws of your blessed health and holiness are manifest before God. While all the earth is filled with your apostolic lessons and exhortations, and diligent culture of the true Faith, the orthodox Church of Christ founded by institution of the Apostles, and most firmly strengthened by our fathers in the Faith, is built up by the instructions of your divine eloquence, and the power of your hortatory admonitions. To which Church all the blessed Apostles, endued with an equal share of honour and authority, converted the multitude of the people, bringing them over, piously and holily, from darkness to light, from depths of ignorance to the true Faith, from death to life, even those whom Divine grace foreknew and predestinated, by means of their wholesome precepts and admonitions. The glorious merits of which holy Apostles are followed by your Paternity, who, perfectly treading in the steps of their examples, adorns the Church of God by the integrity of your life and holiness of your deeds, and, in the full vigour of sound faith and Christian conversation, with pontifical zeal, unceasingly labours to perform and carry out those precepts, well-pleasing to God, which in teaching you

inculcate ; thus truly observing the rule of the Divine law, which says, in the words of the Apostle, ‘ Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.’<sup>6</sup>

“ In the midst of such reflections, news was brought us by persons from Rome, that you had written to Augustine, our comrade, afterwards, by commission of your venerable Holiness, consecrated Bishop of the English nation, and directed thither, and through him to the English, (who, we are informed, have been by you converted to the Faith,) forbidding the separation of married persons related to one another in the fourth degree of affinity. In the parts where I was for a long time brought up and educated with you, no such practice existed, nor have I ever met with it in the decrees of any among your predecessors, or in the institutes, whether general, or special, of our fathers ; nor did I ever before hear of any among the Church’s wisest doctors granting such an indulgence. On the contrary, I have always learned from your pious predecessors, and the other holy fathers, gathered together as well in the Council of Nicæa, as in other holy councils, that continence should be maintained between relatives up to the seventh degree, and I have ever found this law studiously kept by men who live holily and in the fear of God. . . .

“ There are certain churches in our province whose consecration is doubtful ; it cannot be ascertained, either through length of time or the carelessness of those who have had charge of them, whether or not they were dedicated by bishops. On all which points we implore advice from your Holiness, and the authority of your

<sup>6</sup> Rom. ii. 13.

Holy See. And again, whether the instructions which, as we say, we understand to have been given to our fellow-bishop Augustine, and to the English nation, were meant specially for them or generally for all. Upon this and the other aforesaid matters, we desire full and satisfactory information. Far be it from us to signify to you the result of our study and experience in the way of reproof; all we desire is, to know what practice we are in reason, as in faith, to adopt in all these several particulars. And inasmuch as no small stir has been occasioned by these tidings, we wish to learn from you as from the supreme head, what replies we are to give our brethren and fellow-bishops, so that we may not continue in doubt upon these subjects, and that this complaint may not now and hereafter be rife among ourselves and others; nor the report of you, which was ever of the best, be torn to pieces, or supplanted by calumnies, and your name (which God forbid!) be evil spoken of in time to come. As for ourselves, we maintain, by God's grace, all right things in all lowliness of heart; with you we are united in the one bond of charity; and while, as becomes faithful disciples, we vindicate your religious practice in all things, we look to you for guidance in the right course. For we are aware that the prelates of the Holy See, first the Apostles, and afterwards their successors, have ever constituted you guardian of the Catholic Church, especially of bishops, who from their habits of contemplation, and the watch they keep over Christ's flock, are called His Eyes; and have given it you in charge to meditate on subjects relating to our faith and practice, as it is written, 'Blessed is the man . . . who shall meditate on the law of the Lord day and night.'<sup>7</sup> And this medi-

<sup>7</sup> Vid. Ps. i. 2.

tation is not only witnessed by the eyes of readers in the visible shape of letters, but is known to be immovably implanted in your conscience, through the grace of Christ, that richly abounds in you. For at no time is the holy law of Christ our Lord withdrawn from your heart, according to the words of the prophet in the book of Psalms, 'The mouth of the righteous is exercised in wisdom, and his tongue will be talking of judgment.' 'The law of his God is in his heart,'<sup>s</sup> written among your secrets, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God ; and therefore not on tables of stone, but on the tables of the heart. Let all our darkness, then, be dispelled, we entreat, by the timely wisdom of your replies and assistance, that the Day-star may everywhere, through you, most holy Father, beam upon us, and your dogmatic decision cause universal joy ; since the glorious fathers of Holy Church are known to proclaim their own godly determinations, to the strengthening of the inheritance of eternal life. In fine, we pray that the Lord may preserve you, holy Father of fathers, in safety, and acceptance with Him, for ever, and may hear your prayers for us. Amen."

St. Gregory replied in a letter of considerable length, from which the following is extracted :—

"To the most reverend our brother Felix, Bishop, Gregory, servant of the servants of God. .

"Our Head, who is Christ, would have us His members to this end, that of His bounteous love and our faith in Him, He might make us one body in Himself, and that we might so cleave to it, that, as without Him we can be nothing, we may, through Him, be all that we are said to be. From this citadel of our Head let

<sup>s</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 31. [xxxvi. 30, 31, Vulg.]



nothing tear us, lest, declining to be His member, we be forsaken of Him, and wither away as cast-off shoots of the Vine. To the end, then, we may deserve to be the dwelling-place of our Redeemer, let us, with all the earnestness of our minds, abide in His love ; for Himself saith, 'If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him.'<sup>9</sup> Now your Affection, dearest brother, has required us to give, by authority of the Apostolic See, an answer to your inquiries. And this we would hasten to do, not at length, but concisely, by reason of certain engagements which have come upon us through the hindrances arising from our sins. To your studious labours, however, we commit this matter, that you may follow up the investigation of it, and discover what light other institutions of the fathers throw upon it. For it is impossible that a mind harassed and oppressed by burdens and engagements, can pursue such inquiries with the same advantage, and speak of the matter with the same freedom, as one which is full of glee, and quite at ease. These apologies we do not offer with the view of refusing your Holiness the necessary information which you desire, but to the end you may investigate the more extensively, on account of the very limited satisfaction we afford you . . . . .

"As to my communications with Augustine, bishop of the English nation, and, as you remember, your disciple, on the subject of marriage between relatives, you must understand, that I wrote specially for himself and the English nation, which has been lately brought over to the Faith, to the end it might not fall back

<sup>9</sup> John xiv. 23.

from the good it had attained, through dread of an over-severe discipline, and not generally for the rest of Christendom. And accordingly, the whole city of Rome is my witness, that I did not give these instructions to them with the intention, that when firmly rooted in the Faith, those who were found to have married within nearer than the prescribed degrees of consanguinity should not be separated ; or, again, that those should be united who might chance to stand towards each other in any closer relation than that of sixth cousin ; but those who are still novices it is often fitting to warn, in the first place, both by teaching and example, against what is plainly unlawful, and at once, as a dictate of reason, and an act of faith, to keep out of sight what they will afterwards have to do in such matters. For, after the Apostle, who says, ‘I have fed you with milk, and not with meat,’<sup>1</sup> we have granted this indulgence to them alone, (as we have said above,) and not to their posterity, in order that the good which has not yet taken firm root, may not be plucked up, but may be strengthened, according to its beginning, and kept safely, till it arrives at perfection. Verily, if herein we have done otherwise than was meet, you must not ascribe the fault to laxity, but to excess of commiseration : and that such it is, I call God to witness, who knoweth the thoughts of all men, to whose eyes all things are naked and open. For, were I to destroy what our predecessors have established, I should be found not a builder up, but a caster down, according to the witness of the Truth, who says, ‘A kingdom divided against itself shall not stand,’ and every science and law which is at variance with itself must come to nought. Needful, then,

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 2.

is it we should all hold fast, with one accord, the institutions of our holy fathers, doing nought by contention, but, being of one mind for every object of pure devotion, let us, with the help of God, be obedient to all Divine and Apostolical appointments."

What English heart but must be moved by such touching proofs of the holy Father's tenderness towards our country? What a pledge to us these loving expressions of his still active watchfulness over the people of his care! And then he breaks forth into the following strain of affectionate rapture:—

"O how good a thing is charity, which mutually reveals the hearts of the absent, through the power of imagination, of the present, through the exercise of affection! which is the healer of divisions, the composer of disorders, the harmonizer of inequalities, the finisher of imperfect works! How truly does the model of preachers call thee the 'bond of perfectness!' since the other virtues are the parents of perfection, but Charity so knits them together, that from the mind of one who loves they can by no means be dissevered.

"In this judgment it was that I tempered my instructions by the law of charity, and gave, not a precept, but a counsel; nor was it a rule in this case which I delivered for the observance of posterity, but of two dangers I pointed out that for avoidance which was the easier to avoid."

St. Augustine's next question was suggested by the difficulty of finding the proper number of bishops to act at the consecration of one of their order. The Councils of Nicæa and Arles, and the Third of Carthage, made the presence of three essential; though the Apostolical Canons recognize consecrations with but one assistant prelate. But, in cases of extremity, consecra-

tion by a single bishop had been admitted, as in the instance of Siderius, Bishop of Palæbisca, and afterwards Metropolitan of Ptolemais, whose consecration was recognized and confirmed by St. Athanasius. On the strength of this and other precedents, St. Gregory dispensed with the rule in the case of the first bishop consecrated in the English Church. At the same time he required the Archbishop of Canterbury to make provision against the recurrence of such an anomaly. The question and answer are as follows.

*Question.* "If, owing to the length of distance, bishops cannot easily meet, ought one to be consecrated without the presence of others?"

*Answer.* "In the English Church, in which you are as yet the only bishop, you cannot ordain a bishop otherwise than without the presence of others; for when do bishops come from France to be present at the consecration of one of their order? But we would have your Fraternity take care that the bishops whom you ordain are placed at the shortest possible distance from one another, that so there may be no hindrance to the meeting, at an episcopal consecration, of other pastors whose presence is so important. When, then, by the Divine help, you have thus ordained bishops in places near to each other, consecrations should by no means be allowed at which three or four other bishops are not present. For we may take example even from carnal matters, to direct us in a wise and careful disposition of spiritual things. Thus it is, that in the world, married persons are summoned to marriages, in order that those who have gone before in the path of wedlock may be united in the joy of the actual union. Why, then, in this spiritual ordination, also, in which, by the sacred ministry, man is allied with God, should not those

meet together who have been before ordained bishops, and are thus able to take part in the joy, or pour forth united prayers to Almighty God for their brother's safety ?”

It is observable that, while St. Gregory speaks of the difficulties in the way of obtaining the assistance of the *Gallican* bishops, he makes no allusion whatever to the bishops of Britain at that time settled in Wales. The fact seems to have been, that since the first establishment of the Saxons in England, all intercourse with the ancient British Church had ceased.

St. Augustine's Seventh Question relates to intercourse with the bishops of Gaul and Britain. The concluding sentence of St. Gregory's Answer must be noted, as containing the origin of the power which, at a somewhat later period, St. Augustine will be found to claim over the prelates of the ancient British Church.

“As to the bishops of Gaul,” answers the Pope, “we grant you no authority among them ; since, from the time of my remote predecessors, the Bishop of Arles has received the Pall, and there is no call whatever upon us to deprive him of a right once entrusted to him. Should it so happen, then, that your Fraternity were to pass over to the province of Gaul, it would be your part to confer with the Bishop of Arles, so that any vices which may prevail among the other bishops may be corrected ; and that, should he have at all relaxed in vigour of discipline, his zeal may be rekindled by the presence of your Fraternity. We have, accordingly, written to him to urge, that during the stay of your Holiness in Gaul, he should give all heed to your suggestions, and interpose a check as to any point of episcopal conduct which may contravene the laws of our Creator. With regard to yourself, however, it is

not competent to you to pass sentence upon the bishops of Gaul, situated as they are beyond the limits of your jurisdiction. Still we enjoin you, by persuasion and kindness, and the display of exemplary conduct, to reform the vicious where you can, according to the pattern of sanctity: for it is written in the Law, "When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbours standing corn."<sup>2</sup> The sickle of judgment you may not move unto the harvest-field which you see to be committed to another. But the Lord's corn you may and must separate from the chaff of vices which deteriorate it, and by admonitions and persuasions, and a process, as it were, of gentle mastication, convert it into the Lord's Body. But, with respect to acts of authority, you will communicate with the aforesaid Bishop of Arles, that nothing may be neglected which is required by the institution of the fathers.

"All the bishops of Britain, however, we commit to your Fraternity, to instruct the unlearned, strengthen the weak by exhortation, and correct the perverse by authority."

Here some MSS. introduce a Question and Answer upon the relics of St. Sixtus, the history of which is said to have been as follows. St. Augustine had reported to the Pope that the English Christians were in the practice of venerating certain spurious relics of St. Sixtus, which were said to have been discovered in Kent. He accordingly requests that the genuine relics of the Martyr might be sent over, and the English thus enabled to satisfy their devotion upon a legitimate object.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. xxiii. 25.

St. Gregory answers; "We have complied with your request, in order that the people, who, on the spot of the martyrdom of St. Sixtus, are said to venerate certain relics which your Fraternity considers to be neither genuine nor, indeed, those of a Saint at all, may cease from paying devotion to a doubtful object, and receive, in exchange, the benefit of possessing the indubitable remains of the Saint. It seems, however, to me, that if the body, which the people believe to be that of some martyr, has been illustrated by no miracles, and if there are none among the older inhabitants of the country who can testify to having heard from their ancestors the acts of his martyrdom, the relics which have been sent at your request, should be deposited in a separate place, that the spot in which the forementioned body lies, may by all means be blocked up, and the people not allowed to forsake the certain and venerate the doubtful."

Other questions and answers follow, of no profit to the general reader, upon the subject of certain ceremonial disqualifications.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## LETTERS OF ST. GREGORY TO ETHELBERT AND BERTHA.

By the hands of St. Mellitus and his companions, St. Gregory sent letters to the king and queen of England. To Ethelbert he writes as follows :—

“To his most illustrious and most excellent son Ethelbert, king of England, Gregory, bishop, sends greeting.

“The purpose with which Almighty God, in His goodness, raises certain to the government of His people is, that through their means He may impart the gifts of His mercy to those over whom He sets them. And such we gather to be His will in respect of the English nation, over which your Excellence has been called to preside, in order that, through the advantages with which you have been favoured, the benefits of Divine grace may be bestowed upon the nation under your government. Guard then, we entreat you, illustrious son, and that with all possible solicitude, the grace you have been vouchsafed from above; lose no time in extending the faith of Christ among your subjects, multiply the zeal of your uprightness in their conversion, put down the worship of idols, lay low the structures of their temples; by exhortations, by threats, by conciliation, by correction, and by the exhibition of your own good example, build up your subjects in the utmost purity of life, that so you may receive in heaven the reward of Him whose name and whose saving knowledge you have extended upon earth. For He shall render the name of your



Excellence still more excellent among posterity, inasmuch as you have sought and maintained His honour in the world.

“Thus it was that in ancient times the most godly emperor Constantine recalled the Roman commonwealth from the corrupt worship of idols, subjected it, with himself, to our Lord Jesus Christ, the Almighty God, and turned to Him with all his heart, and his people with him; and so it came to pass, that this same emperor surpassed the fame of the princes before him, by the greatness of his achievements. And in the same way may your Excellence now hasten to implant in the hearts of all the kings and people, your subjects, the knowledge of the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that so your glory may transcend in merits and renown that of all the ancient kings of your nation; and by how much you are instrumental in cleansing the sin of others among your subjects, by so much may you stand before the Judgment-seat securer of the pardon of your own.

“Give a willing ear to the admonitions of our most reverend brother Augustine, Bishop; perform his instructions with all devotion, and store them with all care in your memory. Well versed is he in the monastic rule, filled with the knowledge of Holy Scripture, and endued, by God's grace, with all good works. The more readily you give heed to him when he speaks to you of the things pertaining to Almighty God, the more speedily will Almighty God listen to his prayers in your regard. If (which may God forbid!) you should cast his words behind you, how, think you, will God hear his prayers for you, seeing that you refuse to hear him when he speaks for God? With all your mind, then, gird yourself, by His help, in the zeal of faith, and

correspond with his efforts through the power which God imparts to you from on high, that He may make you a partaker of His kingdom, whose Faith you have caused to be received, and guarded in your kingdom.

“We wish, moreover, your Excellence to be aware that, as we learn from the words of our Almighty Lord, in Holy Scripture, the end of this present world is at hand, and that kingdom of the Saints is about to come which is never to end. And, forasmuch as this same end of the world is drawing near, many signs are rife, or threatening, which before were not; such as sudden reverses of temperature, and terrific appearances in the sky, and unseasonable tempests, and wars, famine, pestilences, and earthquakes in parts. Not that all these things will happen in one day; but, in the next generation, all will come to pass. Now, should any of these wonders take place in your country, do not by any means let your heart be troubled, for these notices of the end of the world are sent in time, that so we may learn to be solicitous in the matter of our souls, and may be found hereafter to have been concerned about the hour of death, and prepared in all good works for the coming of our Judge. These things, most excellent son in the Faith, I have expressed in few words, to the end that when the Faith of Christ shall have grown and prevailed in your kingdom, the influence of our exhortations may also prevail with you more and more extensively, and we may be able to speak all the more freely, through the continually increasing joy of our hearts at the entire conversion of your nation.

“I have forwarded you a few trifling tokens of esteem,<sup>1</sup> which, however, you will not account trifling when you

<sup>1</sup> xenia.

bear in mind that they come to you with the blessing of St. Peter upon them. May God Almighty, then, vouchsafe to guard in your heart, and bring to perfection, the grace which He has bestowed. May He prolong your life here for the space of many a year, and after a lengthened term on earth, receive you into the congregation of His heavenly country. My good lord, and dear son in the Faith, may your Excellence be kept in safety by the grace which is from above. Dated, this 22d day of June, in the 19th year of the reign of our lord, the most religious Emperor Mauricius Tiberius, from the consulship of the same our lord, the 18th, and of the Indiction, the 4th. [A.D. 601].<sup>2</sup>

The nature of the presents which St. Gregory sent to king Ethelbert may be gathered from other parts of his correspondence ; especially from a letter to Recharedus,<sup>3</sup> king of the Visigoths. They were apparently relics. To Queen Bertha the Pope wrote as follows :—

#### GREGORY TO BERTHA, QUEEN OF THE ENGLISH.

“Whoso is desirous of obtaining the glory of a heavenly kingdom, upon the termination of earthly power, should strive with the greater earnestness to gain souls to his Creator, to the end he may arrive at the object of his desire by the steps of good works ; and this is what we rejoice to think you have done. Our devout sons, Laurence, presbyter, and Peter, monk, acquainted us on their return with your Excellence’s gracious disposition and demeanour towards our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop Augustine, and with the great comfort he had derived from your Excellence’s

<sup>2</sup> S. Greg. Ep. xi. 66.

<sup>3</sup> Ib. ix. 122.

affection ; and we have rendered our thanks to Almighty God in that, of His mercy, He has deigned to reserve the conversion of the English nation for your reward. For even as by Helena, of precious memory, mother of the most religious Emperor Constantine, the hearts of the Romans were enkindled towards the Faith of Christ, we trust that in like manner, through the zeal of your Excellence, His mercy has been at work in the English nation. And, in truth, long time since, you have felt it your duty to employ your discretion, like a true Christian, in moving the heart of your consort and our illustrious son in the Faith, to the end he might, for the salvation of his kingdom and his own soul, embrace the Faith which ye follow, that so from him, and through his means, from the conversion of the whole nation, a meet reward may accrue to you in the joys of Heaven. For when once, as we have said, your Excellence was fortified in the true Faith, and possessed of the competent learning, there was nothing in this task which should have been tedious or difficult to you. And forasmuch as, of God's will, the present is the convenient season, strive that, with the help of Divine grace, ye may recover with increase such loss as may have followed upon neglect.

“Establish then, by assiduous exhortation, the heart of your illustrious partner in affection towards the Faith of Christ ; may your solicitude be the means of filling him with increase in the love of God, and of enkindling his soul with a new ardour for the thorough conversion of the nation under his care, that so through the zeal of your devotion he may offer a great sacrifice to Almighty God, and the reports we have heard of you may still increase and be confirmed in all possible ways ; since your good is spoken of not only among the Romans,

who have offered powerful prayers for your life, but in different parts of the world, and has reached even Constantinople, and come to the ears of our gracious Emperor. And in like manner as the consolations which have come of your Christian Excellence have been matter of joy to us, may the angels have cause of rejoicing in the perfection of the work you have begun! In aid, then, of the aforesaid our most reverend brother and fellow-bishop, and of the servants of God whom we have commissioned thither, use all zeal and devotion towards the conversion of the nation, that so in this world ye may reign happily with our illustrious son and your consort, and after a lengthened term of years may receive the joys of the life to come, which know no end. And we pray Almighty God to enkindle the heart of your Excellence by the fire of His grace both to perform our words, and to grant you an everlasting recompense as the fruit of good works pleasing to Himself.”<sup>4</sup>

It will have been seen that St. Gregory in his letter to King Ethelbert, advises the destruction of idolatrous temples.<sup>5</sup> On maturer reflection, the holy father saw fit to retract, or modify, this injunction. The execution of it would of course have been exceedingly shocking to the prejudices of the people, and only justifiable, therefore, in the cause of religion. But, however natural to the earliest impulses of holy enthusiasm the utter obliteration of every vestige of Satan’s work, the Church in her wisdom has ever accepted the plea of “invincible ignorance” in extenuation of the sin of idol-worship; and far from accounting the places in which it has prevailed as irrecoverably desecrated by the unconscious pollution, she has rather rejoiced in asserting her power in the Spirit

<sup>4</sup> Ep. xi. 29.

<sup>5</sup> vid. *supra*, p. 173.

who dwells within her, to purify them from all stain and vindicate them to their rightful Owner, whom heathens "ignorantly worship." Not accounting that even the foul taint of original sin (so wilful transgression have not supervened) interposes a bar to the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost, she has not shunned to introduce CHRIST into what had been heretofore the haunts of idolaters, as accounting her own exorcism sufficient to cleanse and prepare them for His reception.

The invasion of popular prejudices, in the instance of festivals and holy-days, would of course have been still more gratuitous ; for, as superstition ever contains within itself the seeds of true religion, it should never be otherwise than the object of tenderness and even reverence : and the Church, who is all to all, makes it a first principle to avail herself of all harmless, much more of all religious, however perverted, prepossessions—such as are, in an especial manner, those which relate to seasons and localities. For there is a sense in which even heathenism is a Divine system, notwithstanding the part which the devil bears in it ; just as the bodies with which we are born into the world are none the less God's work, because, through man's first transgression, our great Enemy has obtained a hold upon them. The line of true Christian wisdom and moderation is marked out by St. Gregory in the following letter, which represents his more deliberate judgment upon this question of religious policy.

TO HIS DEAREST SON MELLITUS, ABBOT,<sup>6</sup> GREGORY, SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD.

"After the departure of our congregation, who are

<sup>6</sup> St. Mellitus, like St. Augustine before, appears to have been constituted by the Pope abbot of the missionary congregation.

now with you, great suspense was occasioned us by the absence of any information as to the prosperity of your journey. Whenever Almighty God shall bring you safe to our most reverend brother Augustine, Bishop, acquaint him with the result of my long deliberation on the subject of England, which is this ; that the idol-temples in that country ought not to be destroyed ; but that after the demolition of the actual idols contained in them, some water should be blessed, and sprinkled in the temples, and that then altars should be raised in them, and relics deposited. For, if the temples in question have been well constructed, they ought to be transferred from the worship of idols into the service of the true God ; in order that the nation, observing this tenderness in the treatment of its religious buildings, may be the rather led to put error from its heart, and when it comes to know and worship the true God, may the more readily resort to the temples with which it is familiar. Moreover, since it is their practice to slay numerous oxen in the sacrifices of their devils, for this solemnity some corresponding one should be substituted ; on the day of the dedication of the church, therefore, or of the martyrs whose relics are deposited in it, they may construct tents out of the branches of trees in the neighbourhood of these same churches, into which the old temples have been converted, and celebrate their festival with religious joy, no longer sacrificing their animals to the devil, but killing them for their own use to the glory of God, and giving thanks of their abundance to the Giver of all things, and thus being the rather disposed to inward satisfactions by how much their innocent festivities are more indulgently promoted. For it is an undoubted fact, that to mould hard minds into shape all at once, is impossible. He who strives to

reach the highest place ascends thither by slow steps, not by vaulting. Thus did our Lord make Himself known to the people of Israel in Egypt, while the honour of the sacrifices which were formerly offered to the devil He reserved to Himself, when He appointed the slaying of animals as a part of religious worship; that in this way, as their hearts were changed, they might partly give up and partly retain the use of sacrifices; offering indeed the same animals as before, but with a different object, and so not as the same sacrifices. Such are the instructions which I consider it necessary your Affection should convey to our aforementioned brother, that he, as on the spot, may consider how the whole matter may best be ordered.

“Dated the 17th day of June<sup>7</sup> in the 19th year of our lord Mauricius Tiberius.”<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> There must be some mistake here, as a letter evidently written after the rest, bears an earlier date by five days. Mabillon considers that the previous letters should be referred to June 15, this to June 28. (Ann. Bened. x. 2.) The incongruity is noticed in the edition of the works of St. Bede, published by the “English Historical Society,” to which the present writer is much indebted.

<sup>8</sup> Ep. xi. 26.



## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE PALL.

A FEW words must be said in this place concerning the Pall, or ensign of metropolitical dignity, transmitted by St. Gregory the Great to the first English Archbishop. The reader who is desirous of knowing all which may be known on the subject, will find a learned dissertation in Mr. Collier's Ecclesiastical History of England, from which, and from a few notices in St. Gregory's Letters, the following particulars are derived.

The Pall, in its most ancient form, was a magnificent robe worn by the metropolitans over the rest of the episcopal dress, to distinguish them from their suffragans. That, in St. Gregory's time, the Pall was a vestment of great splendour and dignity, appears from the warning against pride and worldliness, with which he was in the practice of accompanying the donation. The Pall, therefore, according to its first idea, was intended to remind its wearer of the dignity of his office, and to put him upon a life of suitable circumspection. In later times, however, the form of the Pall was changed; and, instead of a stately robe, or *pallium*, flowing from the shoulders down to the feet, it consisted merely of a strip of woollen cloth worn across the shoulders, to which were appended two other strips of the same material, one of them falling over the breast, and the other hanging down the back, each marked with a red cross, and the part across the shoulders with several smaller crosses,

and the whole being tacked on to the rest of the dress by three golden pins. And, as the shape of the modern differed from that of the more ancient Pall, so did its signification also ; for, while the magnificent vestment of St. Gregory's time was designed to betoken the dignity of the wearer, the simple appendage of more modern date was intended as a foil to the splendour of the episcopal habit, and a safeguard against the love of earthly pomp, which such accompaniments of high ecclesiastical state are apt to awaken in ill-regulated minds. Meanwhile, both the ancient and modern Pall had a farther and a common purpose, that of signifying the intimate connexion between metropolitans and the Holy See. For the Pall, before it was sent from Rome, was laid on the Tomb of the Apostles, and solemnly blessed ; so that it became to its wearer a continual pledge and memento of St. Peter's benediction.

The Pall was in use, as is evident from St. Gregory the Great's Letter to the Primate of Gaul, from times considerably earlier than the seventh century ; not, however, at first as an emblem of authority and token of dependence upon the Roman See, but rather, perhaps, as a mark of favour and personal consideration from the donors. Virgilius, archbishop of Arles, did not receive it till four years after he became archbishop, as appears from the date of St. Gregory's letter accompanying it, compared with that of his own elevation to the See. St. Gregory was the first Pope who conferred the Pall upon other archbishops of France besides the Archbishop of Arles. As in the case of other ecclesiastical usages and principles, what began as mere custom was ultimately formed into law. Thus, at the synod called by St. Boniface, the Apostle of Germany, A.D. 745, it was determined that all Christendom should thenceforth account Rome

as the centre of Catholic communion, and submit to the decisions of the Holy See.<sup>1</sup> And in token of such acknowledgment and dependence, all metropolitans were to apply to Rome for the Pall. The Archbishops of Rouen, Rheims, and Sens, stood out for the privileges of their national Church, and St. Boniface was for a time induced to admit their objections; but at length, upon a remonstrance from Pope Zachary, he renewed his suit in the name of the Holy See, and the refractory archbishops were prevailed upon to accept the unwelcome gift, as it was now explained to them. In the year 872, during the Pontificate of Adrian II., it was decreed that the metropolitans should obtain confirmation from their respective patriarchs, either by imposition of hands, or by the grant of the Pall; but this law, according to Collier, was in no respect more favourable to the power of the Pope in the West than to that of the Eastern patriarchs. Its promulgation, however, was actually followed by a rapid advance of the Roman influence in Europe, and paved the way for the vast spiritual acquisitions of St. Gregory VII.

St. Gregory named London as the seat of the English

<sup>1</sup> S. Bonifacii Ep. ad. Cuthbertum. This Cuthbert was Archbishop of Canterbury. The decree mentioned in the text, is expressed in the following words. It was forwarded to the Archbishop with the other determinations of the council.

“Decrevimus hæc in nostro Synodali conventu, et confessi sumus Fidem Catholicam, et unitatem, et subjectionem Romanæ Ecclesiæ, sine tenus vitæ nostræ, velle servare, sancto Petro et vicario ejus velle subjici; Synodum per omnes annos congregare: metropolitanos pallia ab illâ sede quærere, et per omnia præcepta Sti. Petri canonicè sequi desiderare, ut inter oves sibi commendatas numerentur. Et isti confessioni universè consensimus, et subscripsimus, et ad corpus Sti. Petri, principis Apostolorum, direximus, quod gratulando clerus Romanus et pontifex suscepit.”

Primacy; that city having been similarly dignified in British times. The new Archbishop was instructed to erect twelve sees in his province, and to name a bishop of York, who, as the Church should take root in the northern parts of England, was to be elevated to the rank of an archbishop, and to receive the Pall from Rome. The number of episcopal sees in the two provinces was ultimately to be equalized. During St. Augustine's life, the Archbishop of York was to pay him canonical obedience; afterwards, he was to be independent of the See of London, but to be spiritually subject to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

During British ascendancy, there was a reason why London, as the chief emporium of England, should be also the great Christian metropolis. But since the successful invasion of the Saxons, Canterbury had become the seat of government, and the residence of the chief among the princes of the Heptarchy, whereas London was now but the capital of a subordinate province. When these circumstances were duly made known at Rome, St. Gregory, as appears, sanctioned the transfer of the Primacy from London to Canterbury. A modern enemy of the Holy See will have it that St. Augustine made this change upon his own authority; but as this is antecedently improbable, considering his spiritual relationship to St. Gregory and to Rome, so likewise is it contradicted by a document of St. Gregory's successor, who speaks of that Pontiff as the author of the arrangement.

Thus, while the Catholic Church bore fruit upwards, it also struck root downwards, in English soil. The heathen saw and were afraid, the depths also were troubled. The Lord had once more His people here in England, and the idols bowed down as the cross was

reared. All was calm, orderly, and majestic, like the raising of the Temple without axe or hammer. The invasions of the world, which devastate, are vehement and tumultuous ; those of the Church, which fertilize, are peaceful and sure ; even as the Deluge, which destroyed the earth, came down in torrents, while the Spirit who renewed it was silent in His approach, though "mighty in operation." Thus gently, thus "without observation," because in the power of that Spirit, did the Church gain possession of English ground, and vindicate to herself, almost without men's knowledge, the length and breadth of the land. Here was no violence towards existing prejudices, no contemptuous or intolerant dealing even with popular superstitions ; no bigotry, no fanaticism, no false step. Holy enthusiasm there was in abundance ; but enthusiasm is too deep to be fitful ; it is energetic, not busy. Let us now contract the sphere of our contemplations, and fix them upon the great centre of the picture, in which its whole spirit is as it were embodied and typified—a Missionary Archbishop, with the Catholic Faith as his message, and Miracles as his credentials.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE ARCHIEPISCOPAL PROGRESS.

HAD St. Augustine wanted an excuse for resting from his labours, surely he might at this moment have found one without difficulty. The care of the English Church, with which he was now entrusted, was occupation enough, one would have thought, to employ the most active, and responsibility enough to satisfy the most scrupulous. It seemed indeed the natural thing for him to stay quietly at Canterbury, regulate the affairs of his monastery, nominate his suffragans, and delegate his missionary functions to younger and less dignified hands. But so it is, that Saints continually act at variance with our expectations. When we determine in our own minds that they have a call to be busy, they disappoint us by pleasing to be quiet; when we consider it suitable to their dignity that they should rather superintend than work, they force us to the conclusion either that they are regardless of dignity, or that we do not understand what true dignity is.

St. Augustine, at all events, does not appear to have prized the *otium cum dignitate*; nay, he chose, as we have already observed, a way of life which seems at first sight inconsistent with the post of an archbishop. The truth must be confessed, that Saints differ from common men in not being apt to catch at excuses. It does not satisfy them to know that a certain thing is not wrong; they are deterred from taking up with it,

by the fact of its being but second-best. And thus it is, that they continually surprise us by their proceedings, as seeming to delight in striking out for themselves new and eccentric paths. And from not understanding them, we go on to criticize them, not always or at once remembering, that "the natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit," and that, in the case of certain given persons, it is on the whole far more likely that such as we should be in the dark, than such as they in the wrong.

Whether, then, there be anything out of the common way in an archbishop turning missionary and traversing the country on foot (as perhaps there is not), at least there is something altogether wonderful and above man in that zeal for Christ which would not suffer this godly prelate to find rest for the sole of his foot in an as yet unconverted land. Nothing would content him but starting off, Metropolitan of all England as he was, without equipage or horse, with no body-guard but the poor, and no arms but the arms of Saints, prayer and watching, to search on the highways and among the hedges for guests to fill the vacant seats at the Lord's marriage-board. Alone, or perhaps with a few attendant monks, and certainly on foot, the holy Archbishop proceeded on his way, and took, as we may conceive, the great Roman road from London to the north of England. His very stature, as we have already observed, had something superhuman about it, and at once distinguished him from the crowds who speedily gathered round his path. He had not gone far before his journey began to assume the appearance of a triumphant Progress; if we may apply that word to the movement of a train in which were no insignia of worldly grandeur, and where the regulations of ceremonial were outstripped by the impulses of zeal

and affection. Never was crowned monarch or laurelled warrior more enthusiastically greeted, more multitudinously followed, than was that humble and mortified archbishop. Like a true apostle as he was, he carried with him neither purse, nor scrip, nor provision for his journey;<sup>1</sup> yet lacked he not all necessities, for his trust was in Him who feedeth the young ravens that call upon Him, and in whose sight His own elect are of more price than many sparrows.

On coming near the city of Eboracum, the Saint was accosted by a man who sat by the wayside begging, and who laboured under the two-fold scourge of blindness and palsy. The Saint remembered that great Apostle to whom he was chiefly bound, who said, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee; in the Name of JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth rise up and walk." Why should not that Name work miracles at any time? Why not among ourselves now-a-days? Truly, because we lack the conditions of its power—Catholic faith and Catholic sanctity. But here was no bar to its sovereign efficacy; and accordingly, if we may trust those who have transmitted what they received, the prayer of the Saint was answered, and his Divine commission accredited in the eyes of the unbelievers. The paralytic leapt like a hart, and the eyes of the blind were opened. Now, whether this and other miracles which we shall relate, after those who have gone into their evidence, actually happened as they are recorded, or form rather the illustrations than the instances of the supernatural power unquestionably inherent in all the true Saints of God, on this point we are warranted in the present, if in any case, in being com-

<sup>1</sup> Mabillon, *Acta Sanct. Bened. in vitâ S. Augustini.*



paratively little solicitous ; for that St. Augustine of Canterbury worked miracles for the conversion of England is acknowledged even by many Protestants ; and what precisely those miracles were, is surely a secondary consideration. Meanwhile, it will not be necessary to interrupt the thread of the narrative farther than by saying that if the reader so far forgets that he is occupied upon a portion of ecclesiastical history as to stumble at the marvellous portions of the present biographical sketch, it is hoped he will at least suspend his judgment till a few pages further on, or accept the statements subject to any qualifications which may secure them from the chance of irreverent usage, and him from the risk of that especial blasphemy which consists in slighting the manifestations of God's Holy Spirit ; a sin, one should have thought, denounced by our Blessed Lord in language sufficiently awful to make the possibility of it an unspeakably more formidable alternative than any amount of credulity. Not indeed as if the wanton circulation, and over easy acceptance, of miraculous histories, were an insignificant mischief, seeing that we must not give occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. But, taking our Divine Redeemer's singular commendation of the temper which men call credulous, in connexion with His terrific denunciation of the sin which in its measure is involved in every deliberate trifling with the genuine works of the Spirit, it seems strange indeed that professing Christians should count it a safer thing to scoff at miracles as such, than to enter upon the Lives of the Saints as upon a new world of wonders whose sights speedily conform the habits of vision to their own standard, till at length the eye sees objects before it which are, perhaps, but the reflections of images within. Upon the great principle recommended by Butler, in

his Analogy, of taking the safer side in matters of religion which are felt to be doubtful, surely every truly wise man will prefer the alternative of believing some miracles which may be false, to that of encouraging himself in a critical, not to say sceptical, temper. On the side of the historian of the Church, or the biographer of Saints, there lies doubtless a great duty of caution; yet the rash and uninstructed zeal of historians and biographers, though it suggests the temptation, does not therefore furnish the excuse, to languor of belief, still less to irreverence of objection, in readers.

To return from our digression: It was most probably during this northern progress of the great archbishop that the Church received that vast accession of converts at one time, which has sometimes, to all appearance, been confused with the baptism of the 10,000 at Canterbury. There seems undoubtedly to have been a baptism of multitudes at once in the river Swale; but we suppose it not to have taken place at the Christmas of 597, which was before St. Augustine had proceeded on his missionary travels, but about the summer of 602, the period with which we are now more immediately engaged. It is mentioned by annalists, as a miraculous circumstance, that so prodigious a multitude should have received baptism by immersion in a deep stream, without a single instance of loss of life or bodily injury. In truth, what we call the "providential" runs up into almost inextricable implication with the "miraculous."

The following incident, which is related by Mabillon, belongs to the class of supernatural occurrences which are not merely succours to faith, like the last mentioned, but attestations to the fact of Divine power in the sight of the unbelieving world. Such verifications of high

ministerial claims, (even taking that low *à priori* ground which finds its place in treatises on Christian Evidence,) as they are peculiarly needful, so of God's mercy it is likely that they will be largely vouchsafed, as aids to the work of the Missionary.

As St. Augustine was leaving York, he was met by a leper labouring under a peculiarly distressing form of that loathsome disease. His articulation was affected by the malady, and he had no way of making his sufferings and necessities known but by indistinct sounds, as it had been the cry of some animal. Encouraged by the sweet smile and outstretched hand of the messenger of mercy, he managed to crawl up to him, and came under the power of the hand which was uplifted to bless him. Then, his eye beaming with light expressive of the soul's illumination, and his voice distilling words of honey, "In the Name of our Lord and Saviour," said the Saint, "be thou clean from all defilement." "Not so quickly," proceeds the annalist, "was Naaman, the Syrian, cured of his plague, for he was bid to wash seven times in the Jordan. For Augustine spake" (not like one of the old prophets but) "in the strength of His Word who says in the Gospel, 'Be thou clean,' and whose word runneth swiftly. O thrice-blessed poverty in Christ! O poverty, that art the true riches! richer than all the wealth of the earth! O treasure, exhaustless in abundance! where, not the gold which covetous mortals affect, but richer than gold incomparably, is dealt out to overflowing the salvation of body and soul 'without money and without price.'"

Such is the strain in which monks describe the acts of the Saints. In proportion as their eye is dulled to the claims of the outer, it is sharpened to behold the wonders of the inner world. Such Christians live and

range as in an element of their own. Their histories are accordingly almost like meditations ; no wonder if to men, whose conversation is in this lower world, the records of their experience should be wearisome as the tales of dreamers, their chronicles of events read like fiction, their comments sound like the ravings of fanaticism.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## ST. AUGUSTINE. HIS MIRACLES AND THEIR EVIDENCE.

Few readers will be disposed to deny that the miracles of the Apostle of England differ, as to the first impression with which they strike us, from the miracles of some other Saints with whom we happen to be less familiar. Their evidence is not necessarily more trustworthy, but it is certainly more available: there requires a greater hardihood in scepticism to resist it; a greater disregard of public opinion to write or speak against it. Nothing, surely, can be less philosophical, as well as less religious, than objections to any recorded miracle of any age, grounded simply upon the frivolousness (as men speak) of its character, or the inadequacy of its object. What is the meaning of all such talk? Are we wiser than God, or are His ways as our ways? Let cavillers at miracles say so in good earnest, and we shall then know how to deal with them. But as yet, at least, it is happily less respectable to broach infidelity, than to write down the *principle* of all belief. Yet, if men who deal with the lives of the Saints upon *à priori* grounds do not, happily for themselves, discern the dangerous contiguity of their reasonings to those of the infidel, and even the atheist, there are not wanting shrewder intellects than their own which will help them to the discovery. If they fancy themselves able to distinguish to their own satisfaction between, on the

one hand, such antecedent objections (for it is of antecedent objections only that we are here speaking) to the miracles of the Saints, and, on the other, the flippancies of which the Old Testament has, ere now, been made the subject, there are others cleverer than themselves, though less reputable, who will gladly employ the respectability of their names to obtain a hearing for arguments at once deeper and more consistent than their own.

But, at all events, the history of St. Augustine of Canterbury has this advantage over some others, that there is a dignity on the very face of it which (to use a forcible Latin word) "profligates" calumny, —not merely wards it off, but routs, and explodes, and shames it. As to the mighty works which are related of our apostle, they are, on the whole, surely of that simple and straightforward character which rather strikingly contradistinguishes the Evangelical and Apostolical miracles from some of the Prophetical ; they are of a kind fitted to overrule unbelief, and not merely to sustain faith. And this is what men naturally expect in the case of Divine manifestations accompanying and illustrating a mission to the heathen.

But, again, it is a considerable security for the reverent acceptance of the history of St. Augustine, that he was thus, in fact, a Missionary. This circumstance at once supplies what intellectual men presumptuously demand, an ostensible cause for the intervention of direct and obvious supernatural agency. Objectors are certainly more tolerant of miraculous records, in the case of missionaries, than of any other Saints ; not seeing, apparently, that if they allow miracles to missionaries, they give up the question of principle, and make their stand upon that of degree ; they do not deny that

Almighty God has signally interposed in the later as well as in the earlier Church, but they claim to be judges of the circumstances under which it is reasonable that He should interpose. This is a great step—or rather it narrows the ground between these objectors and the Catholics almost to contact; not indeed in *fact*, but (which is a widely different thing) in *logic*. The intellectual barriers are removed, the ethical, alas! are sometimes even strengthened, rather than the contrary, by the logical approximation.

Such cases may not unfairly be compared with that of St. Thomas. And our Blessed Lord seems to deal with them in a like condescending way, as with that holy Apostle, when he stipulated for stronger evidence than his Lord had counted sufficient. Such evidence was indeed forthcoming at his demand; but his satisfaction was without a blessing. Let us also remember, as instructed by this example, that it is the *temper* of faith which is necessarily and always blessed by CHRIST our Redeemer, but that the mere *act* of assent is not so necessarily or always blessed.

Again the inquiry arises, if Christianity did not make its way into Saxon England by miracles, how came its progress to be so rapid and so wide? Many outward circumstances did undoubtedly, through the mercy of Divine Providence, concur with supernatural agency to favour the result; but this, too, was the case in the original propagation of Christianity. If the pacification of the Roman world in the time of Augustus, be none the more a “cause” (in the infidel sense) of the triumph of Christianity at its first introduction, because unbelievers have so magnified it, or if, rather, but a secondary and tributary cause, where by them it is dignified to the rank of a primary one, then is it no dero-

gation from the supernatural power which wrought to the conversion of England, that the progress of the blessed Gospel here was facilitated by the political circumstances of the time when it was brought over. Instead of considering, with the infidel, that the miracles are not certain because the preparation was apparent, the believer will rather look upon the preparation as but an additional evidence of that providential design which was exhibited in the miracles. Or if, again, the worn-out superstitions of the ancient mythology offered so feeble a resistance to the power of the Truth in the world at large, as to give that Truth, so satisfactory to the cravings of man's moral nature, so harmonious in its proportions, so beautiful in its results, an easy victory among the nations of antiquity, while yet it is esteemed none the less certain that the Arm of the Lord was visibly with it, neither, surely, can the rapid progress of Christianity in this country be set down rather to the weakness of the power which was arrayed against it, than to the evident display of Divine tokens in its behalf. For, perhaps, there was never a religious system more deeply tinctured with the genius of a people than was that of our Saxon forefathers. And if their warlike temper and habits gave them many advantages towards the reception of Christianity over those polished and worldly-wise nations among which St. Paul preached, these advantages were surely counterbalanced by the chivalrous pertinacity with which the warrior children of warrior parents, educated for heroes, and, as we may say, dieted on blood, would be apt to cleave to the stern and cruel rites of Woden and Tuiscó.

Again, a belief in the miraculous power of St. Augustine is necessary to the history. It has never been questioned that two separate Conferences were held with



the British bishops, and that the issue of the former was determined by a miraculous display in favour of the Saint. No other hypothesis, it is believed, but that of a miracle has ever been devised to explain why the first meeting was so abruptly brought to a close. And this is the more remarkable, considering the feuds between the Britons and the Saxons, and the angry discussions, of which, from first to last, those celebrated Conferences have been the subject.

This acquiescence, even on the part of avowed adversaries of the Catholic Faith, in the miraculous claims of St. Augustine, is due, perhaps, in no small degree to the respect in which St. Bede, that especially English historian of the Church, has ever been held among Protestants as well as others. For the testimony of that *naïf* and thoroughly uncontroversial writer (how, indeed, should they be controversial who knew but of the One Faith ?) is so explicit to the abundance of the manifestations vouchsafed in our Saint, as to find its response in simple and ingenuous minds,—and this independently of the weight which so early an authority must carry with it in the estimation of critics. But the fact of these miracles is attested by a writer yet earlier than St. Bede ; himself also a Saint, contemporary with St. Augustine, and whose means of ascertaining the circumstances to which he testifies, were of the readiest and completest. Let us now hear how St. Gregory addresses St. Augustine on the very subject of the miracles which had been wrought by him during the earlier part of his English mission. Let us observe, especially, the *natural* way in which this great Saint notices the glorious works of his son in the Faith, his brother in the Kingdom of Heaven. It would certainly appear, from his letter, as if the report of St.

Augustine's miracles had been neither beyond his expectation, nor in contradiction to his experience.

GREGORY TO AUGUSTINE, BISHOP OF THE ENGLISH.

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will! For the corn of wheat which fell into the ground is dead, [and hath brought forth much fruit,<sup>1</sup>] that so He should not reign alone in heaven, by whose death we live, by whose weakness we are strengthened, by whose Passion we are snatched from suffering, through whose love we were led to seek in Britain the brethren whom we knew not, of whose Gift we have found those whom we sought in ignorance. But who is sufficient to declare what joy sprang up in the hearts of all the faithful in this place since the English nation, through the operation of the grace of Almighty God, and the labours of your Fraternity, hath been rid of the darkness of error, and overspread with the light of our holy Faith? since, with a perfect mind, this people now tread their idols under foot, whereunto, in the madness of superstition, they have heretofore been subject; since they now worship God out of a pure heart; since, recovered from the helplessness of their evil deeds, they are now bound by the strict rules of holy teaching; since now, they are with all their mind subject to Divine precepts, and aided by the understanding of them; since now they are humbled even to the dust in prayer, and lie prostrate in spirit on the ground. Whose work is this but His who saith, 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work?'<sup>2</sup> Who, that He might shew Himself willing to convert the world,

<sup>1</sup> Vid. John xii. 24.

<sup>2</sup> John v. 17.

not by man's power, but Himself by His own strength, chose men of no letters for the preachers whom He would send into the world. And this, too, He hath also done in this instance also, in that, among the English people, He hath deigned to perform deeds of strength through the infirmity of the weak.

"Howbeit, dearest brother, there is in that heavenly Gift what, in the midst of all our great joy, may well cause us to fear, and that with an exceeding great fear. I well know that by the hands of your Affection, Almighty God hath wrought great miracles in the nation of which He would make choice. Need is there, then, that concerning this same heavenly Gift, you should at once rejoice while you fear, and fear while you rejoice. Rejoice assuredly you may, in that the souls of the English, through exterior miracles, are drawn towards interior grace; yet must you also fear, lest, among the signs which are wrought by you, your feeble mind be lifted up into presumption of itself, and in proportion as it is exalted in honour from without, fall through vain-glory from within. We ought to bear in mind that the disciples, when they returned with joy from preaching, and said unto the Lord, 'Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy Name,' were straightway answered, 'In this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice, because your names are written in Heaven.'<sup>3</sup> For they, in rejoicing over miracles, had set their heart on a joy, private and temporal. But from the private joy they are recalled to the public, from the temporal to the eternal, when it is said to them, 'In this rejoice, that your names are written in Heaven.' It is not all

<sup>3</sup> Luke, x. 20.

the elect who work miracles ; howbeit, all their names are kept written in Heaven. For, to the disciples of the Truth, there should be no joy but on account of that good which they have in common with all, and wherein there is no end of their joy.

“ It remains then, dearest brother, that, in the midst of those things which you do externally by the power of God, you should never cease from judging yourself discreetly within ; and should discreetly understand both concerning yourself, who you are, and likewise how high a grace is with this same nation, towards whose conversion you have been vouchsafed even the power of miracles. And if you remember yourself to have ever transgressed, whether in word or in deed, in the sight of your Creator, call this continually to mind, to the end the remembrance of your guilt may repress the mounting pride of your heart. And whatever power to do signs you shall receive, or have received, account not this as a gift to yourself, but rather to those for whose salvation such gifts have been vouchsafed you.

“ And while on this subject, it is impossible not to remember what happened in the case of one of God’s servants, and one very precious in His sight. Moses, truly, whilst leading the people of God out of Egypt, wrought, as your Fraternity well knows, many wondrous signs in that country. And in his fast of forty days on Mount Sinai, he received the Tables of the Law in the midst of lightnings and thunders, and, while all the people feared greatly, was joined—he alone—with Almighty God in intimate and familiar converse. Then opened he a path through the Red Sea, and had the pillar of a cloud as a guide in his way ; when the people hungered, he brought them down manna from Heaven, and by a miracle satisfied their desire, even to

excess, with abundance of flesh in the wilderness. And then, when, in the time of drought, they came near a rock, his faith failed him, and he doubted whether he could bring water out of it; but at the word of the Lord, he struck it, and the water burst forth in torrents. And, after this, how many miracles he wrought for thirty and eight years in the desert, who shall be able to account or to find out? As often as any doubtful matter pressed on his mind, he entered into the tabernacle<sup>4</sup> and inquired of the Lord in secret, and was straightway instructed by the Lord concerning the matter. And when the Lord was angry with the people, he appeased Him by the intervention of his prayers; and those who rose up in pride and made divisions among the people, he caused to be swallowed up in the cavity of the yawning earth. The enemy he harassed by victories, and displayed signs among the people. But when at length he reached the Land of Promise, he was called up into the Mount and was reminded of the sin he had committed thirty and eight years before, when he doubted of his power to bring forth the water. And he learned that for this he could not enter the Land of Promise. By this instance we learn how fearful a thing is the judgment of God, who wrought such mighty works by this His servant, yet kept his sin so long in remembrance.

“Therefore, dearest brother, if we must acknowledge that he, who was thus especially chosen by Almighty God, did still, after so many signs, die for his sin, what ought to be our fear, who know not as yet whether we be of the elect at all?

“Touching miracles which have been done by the

<sup>4</sup> Exod. xxxiii. 9.

reprobate, what shall I say to your Fraternity who know so well the words which His Truth spake in the Gospel? 'Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy Name? and in Thy Name have cast out devils? and in Thy Name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.' Very great restraint, then, must be put on the mind in the midst of signs and miracles, lest, perchance, a man seek his own glory in these things, and rejoice with a merely private joy at the greatness of his exaltation. Signs are given for the gaining of souls, and towards His glory by whose power they are wrought. One sign the Lord hath given us, wherein we may rejoice with exceeding joy, and whereby we may recognise in ourselves the glory of election,—'By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another;'<sup>5</sup> And this sign the prophet sought when he said, 'Shew me some token for good, that they which hate me may see it and be ashamed.'<sup>6</sup>

"These things I say, because I desire to bring down the mind of him who hears me to the depth of humility. But I know that your humility hath a just confidence of its own. I myself am a sinner; and I hold it in most certain hope, that, by the grace of God, even our Lord Jesus Christ, our Almighty Creator and Redeemer, your sins have been already forgiven, and therefore you are in the number of the elect, so that the sins of others may be forgiven by you. Nor will your guilt bring sorrow in time to come, since your part it is to give joy in Heaven by the conversion of many. He, the same our Creator and Redeemer, said, when speaking of

<sup>5</sup> John xiii. 35.

<sup>6</sup> Ps. lxxxvi. 17. (lxxxv. Vulg.)

the repentance of man, 'I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance.'<sup>7</sup> And if great joy, then, be in Heaven over one penitent, what may we suppose that joy to be, when so vast a nation is converted from its error, and, coming to the Faith, condemns, by repentance, all the evil that it hath done? Let us unite in this joy of the Angels of Heaven, by concluding with these same words of Angels with which we began. Let us say—let us one and all say, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.'"<sup>8</sup>

Miserable, indeed, is it to interrupt the biography of a Saint with discussions of an apologetic sound! Miserable to exhibit such a letter as this, for evidence's rather than for edification's sake! May these blessed Saints forgive the injury to their names, if such it be! And may H<sup>g</sup>, whom we should chiefly fear to offend, acquit of all irreverence this attempt to justify the marvels of His grace in the sight of the unbeliever!

<sup>7</sup> Luke xv. 7.

<sup>8</sup> Lib. xi. Ep. 28.

## CHAPTER XX.

## FIRST PANBRITANNIC CONFERENCE.

THE date of this celebrated meeting, as of other events in the Life of St. Augustine of Canterbury, is a subject of controversy among ecclesiastical antiquaries. It has been attributed severally to the years 599, 601, 602, 603, and even 604. Its scene is acknowledged, on all hands, to have been a certain spot "in the province of the Huiccii, on the confines of the West Saxons," and most probably in one or other of the two present counties of Gloucester or Worcester. Some fix it at a place called Aust, or Aust-clive in the former county, lying on the Severn, the usual passage for ferry-boats from England into South Wales, and where Edward the Elder had afterwards an interview with the Welsh Prince, Leoline; though others are of opinion that, although the site is thus correctly determined, the Conference itself took place, not in a town, but under the shadow of an oak-tree. That, at any rate, it was near an oak, appears from the ancient name of the spot, "Augustinaes-ac."<sup>1</sup>

It does not appear that St. Augustine took more than one great journey into the interior of England;

<sup>1</sup> See Cressy, *Hist. of Brittany*, B. xiii. c. 17, whose reasons for considering that the Conference took place within-doors, in some village appear satisfactory.



nor, considering the hindrances to locomotion which those days presented, and the shortness of the time into which his missionary labours were compressed, is it likely that, without some strong motive, he should have gone twice over the same ground. Now there is reason for supposing that the Saint was at different times in the northern, western, and midland parts of England ; for various records furnish traces of his footsteps in Yorkshire, Dorsetshire, and Oxfordshire. If, then, his Yorkshire mission happened, as we have been supposing, in 602, and if, as Mabillon represents, he went from Yorkshire to the West of England, may it not be supposed, with considerable probability, that he took Worcestershire and Gloucestershire on his way from Yorkshire into Dorsetshire ? This would bring the Synod of Augustinaes-ac to about the year 603, which tallies with the computations of some chronologists. If, as Mabillon seems to think, the Conferences with the British bishops preceded the Yorkshire expedition, St. Augustine must have come back to London before going into the West, which does not agree with Mabillon's own words.<sup>2</sup> Such inquiries are neither very interesting nor very important,—except, indeed, as all is interesting and important which relates to the Saints. However, it is some compensation to their natural dulness, that they incidentally supply food for the imagination. It matters little towards the great objects of ecclesiastical history and biography, whether the Saint went this way or that, or was present at some remarkable transaction in one year or in another. But it vivifies our thoughts of him to have some notion even upon the most subordinate topics of his history ; and far more essential is

<sup>2</sup> In occidentalem ab aquilonali plaga *divertit*.

it that such a notion should be definite, than that it should be true. And so much concerning the time and the place of the Conference. Now let us turn our attention to the circumstances and subject of it.

We have lost sight of the British Church since 586, when Theonus and Thadioc, archbishops respectively of London and York, quitted their sees, bearing with them the relics of Saints, and the appurtenances of Divine Service, and withdrew into Wales. This was virtually ceding the eastern and southern parts of the island to the idolaters: but they had no alternative except death or flight; and it was not against their Lord's command, when persecuted in one city, to flee to another. That individual British Christians were mixed up, even at the time of St. Augustine's arrival, with the Saxon population, in the character of slaves, is, as a matter of history, unquestionable; but how far there could be anything like Christianity in a country where was no Church government, nor, as far as appears, any Christian church, (excepting in Cornwall, which was a British settlement, and at Canterbury, where St. Martin's had been converted into a sort of private chapel for the Queen,) does not sufficiently appear, though an opinion has prevailed extensively to the contrary. In Wales, however, the case was far otherwise; in Wales were several bishops, one large monastery, at least, with a school of clerical education, consecrated places for Divine worship, and a regular body of Clergy, secular as well as regular.

We have already seen<sup>3</sup> that St. Gregory gave St. Augustine authority over the British bishops, in these words: "All the bishops of Britain we commit to your

<sup>3</sup> Vid. *supra*, p. 171.

Fraternity." And now the time was come for the Archbishop to assert his prerogative.

It must have been a very trying situation, that of the British Christians. Their country was in the hands of implacable enemies, of foreigners and idolaters ; with themselves, at once exiled and not expatriated, was right without possession, and the knowledge of the Truth, without the ability to impart it. Fretted, if not harassed, by the neighbourhood of their conquerors, they had lost a footing in their own country without gaining one in another ; they were prisoners in their own house. To have sallied forth, cross in hand, and mixed, at the imminent peril of their lives, among their prosperous and insulting conquerors ; to have gone into the midst of their bitterest enemies, not as vindicators of right, but as ministers of peace ; to have had to waive all claims but that of priority in the Kingdom of Heaven, and virtually recognize the position of their invaders, by the very fact of entering into pacific relations with them,—this would have been, indeed, a sore struggle to human nature. These British Christians of St. Augustine's time have been the subjects of a good deal of historical unfairness on both sides ; they are all in the wrong with one set of writers, and all in the right with another. The truth seems to lie in a mean. There were certainly no Saints and great men among them ; but when we have said this, we have surely given the sum of their offending ; or at least expressed the severest judgment which circumstances warrant. It is to be feared that pride *was* at the root of their apathy ; but it was probably concealed from themselves under some one of those countless disguises by which it passes itself off in a creditable character to all but minds of the tenderest conscientiousness, and most determined resolution. At

any rate, we Englishmen of this day, with our high national professions, and our jealousy of foreign interference, have no right to be over critical upon the subject of exclusiveness.

And again, it may readily be conceived that these injured and uneasy exiles would look with no very favourable eyes upon the new Archbishop. Notwithstanding all their natural and human feelings and antipathies, it could not but at times haunt them painfully, that they were Christians, and their nearest neighbours idolaters, and that in Christ there is neither barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free. They could not but acknowledge that a great work lay at their doors, whatever reasons there might exist for neglecting or delaying it. Perhaps they still looked to undertake it, and the time was not yet come. Meanwhile there penetrated, even as far as them, the rumour of this "Italian priest," (as they might be tempted to think of him,) who, appearing one day on the shores of England, without intelligible claim, or ostensible reason, or satisfactory credentials, had made his way, with forty adventurers like himself, to the seat of government and the court of royalty, and there had ingratiated himself with men in power, and risen by rapid steps to the throne which might seem to belong, as of right, to others. And now he was perambulating the land from end to end, with fame before and blessings behind him. Who shall say that, under such circumstances, all dissatisfaction must needs have been ingratitude, and all mistrust envy? Considering the difficulty of accurate information peculiar to those uncivilized times, the impediments to intercourse between the Britons and their enemies, with the various liabilities to misrepresentation, and temptations to prejudice, which circumstances created, it really seems no

necessary discredit whatever to the aboriginal Christians of this island, that, victims as they had conceivably been, of fitful rumours and coloured representations, they should have been somewhat disconcerted at the tidings of St. Augustine's approach, and have given him a less courteous reception than was meet.

Forth, however, they came, like the ghosts of a Church which men had supposed to have been long "quietly inurned;" or like antediluvian relics forced up by some sudden convulsion to the surface of the ground; witnesses, in the sight even of unbelievers, to the Church's age, and links of connexion with the aboriginal days. On this first occasion there seem to have come but one or two representatives of the ancient hierarchy of Britain, with certain of the clergy; all accounts speak of the former conference as far less numerous attended and formally conducted than the latter.

The life of the British Church was not indeed extinct, but it was a slumbering and torpid life. Mutual sympathy between the members of Christ's Body, is the very condition of their energy and coherence; and mutual sympathy there can be none—at least, none which is thrilling and powerful, without active intercommunion. The several members of each single Church are not more intimately knit together in one communion and fellowship, than is that special Church herself with the other component parts of the great Christian family. Each portion of Christ's heritage is a participant in the joys and sufferings of the rest; the greater has no right to consider itself self-sufficient, nor the lesser insignificant; the foot and the hand cannot dispense each with the other's ministrations. The Church is shadowed forth in Holy Scripture under all those images which especially

denote the intimacy of mutual relation between the parts, and of the parts to the whole. It is the Vine whose sap circulates through all the branches ; it is the building "fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth ;" it is the river of Paradise, whose divergent streams fertilize the earth. Branches severed from the main stem flourish awhile, and then die ; they have no vigour of their own. That they vegetate at all, in their separated state, this proves nothing but the tenacity of the life which for a season inheres in them. They survive the convulsion which has rent them from the parent stock, but it is a sickly and a pining life which still cleaves to them. They are not dead, but they do not thrive. It is the same with an amputated limb ; it does not stiffen and shrivel up at once ; but it is past animating, and what is more, the main body resents the injury which has been done it, and leaves the insulated branch, or member, as it were, to its fate. We cannot re-insert it so as to make it share in the healthful juices of the system. We may tie it on, but the system works independently of it, and it dies none the less. A limb which is only broken, may be re-set ; a branch which is only languid, may be reinvigorated ; but once detach it from the trunk, and all hope of reunion must end.

Not less fatal to the life—at least to the vigour, of the detached member is every case of real, energetic schism in the Christian Body. What schism is, this is a question by itself. Like all other sins, it admits of its multifarious degrees, and its indefinitely near approximations without actual contact. And what is true of bodies *in* schism, is, by the very terms of the analogy just employed, not true of bodies only on the verge of it, or clear of its special guilt.

And this latter appears to have been precisely the case of the ancient British Church—at all events, till it formally repudiated the authority of St. Augustine. Whether that act of repudiation made the whole difference between communion and non-communion, is a matter which our present ecclesiastical position precludes us from discussing without liability to misapprehension, or danger of disloyalty, either to our own communion, or to the Church Catholic; but, at any rate, the British Christians were not in the same *moral* situation before and after the “Synod of Augustine’s Oak,” for their sin, if such it were, was rendered, by the issue of that meeting, a conscious and formal, when before it had been but a latent and undeveloped one.

Our present concern, however, is with the state of the British Church anterior to the former of the two conferences. And surely that state was one far less of fault than of misfortune. The ancient Church of Britain, like every other Church in those days of Christendom, was nominally and externally in communion with the See of Rome; but from some of the special blessings of that dependence upon the centre of unity, the Church of Britain had long been cut off; all political connexion between this island and Rome had ceased from a comparatively early time, and, while the flame of zeal and charity which St. Germanus had kindled, was waxing continually weaker and weaker, the British Church, whether through apathy or dislike of foreign interference, made no effort to replenish its wasting lamp from an external source. It is plainly impossible that either unity or uniformity can be maintained, if Churches refuse to confer and (if we may use the expression) compare notes, with one another. As to doctrinal orthodoxy, indeed, there seems no good reason for

supposing that the British Church swerved in the succeeding generations from the ancient traditions restored by St. Germanus ; but in points of ecclesiastical practice, trenching hard upon essentials, a very serious amount of slovenliness had crept in without remonstrance, and was harboured without apparent consciousness. We have already noticed certain irregularities, perhaps under the circumstances inevitable, in the consecration of St. Kentigern,<sup>3</sup> which do not seem to have attracted observation till the active communication between England and the See of Rome was revived in the time of St. Gregory. A still more considerable departure from ecclesiastical tradition and usage seems to have gained ground about the same period, (the earlier part of the sixth century,) which will require a distinct consideration in this place.

As early as the second century, a difference sprang up between the East and West on the subject of keeping Easter. Certain Asiatics, professing to follow the tradition of St. John, were for keeping the Paschal Feast on the 14th day of the first Jewish month, coincidently with the celebration of the Passover among the Jews ; and three days afterwards, without regard to the day of the week, they commemorated our Lord's Resurrection. The Western Churches followed a different method, for which they pleaded the authority of St. Peter. They kept Easter on the Sunday intervening between the 14th and 21st day of the moon of March. Thus while (so far like the others) they did not destroy, but fulfil the ancient ceremonial law, in keeping the Passover between the 14th day at evening and the 21st day at evening, they invariably commemorated the Resurrec-

<sup>3</sup> Vid. *supra*, p. 38.



tion on "the first day of the week." Hence arose a sharp controversy between the East and West: the Western Churches accused those of the East of Judaism; while they were themselves in turn charged with making the law of none effect through their own unauthorized traditions. About the middle of the second century, St. Polycarp came to Rome to confer with Pope Anicetus on the subject; but they separated without any satisfactory result. Almost fifty years later, Pope Victor, after having consulted with other bishops of the West, issued a decree in which the Quartodecimans (or maintainers of the 14th day against the Sunday) refused to acquiesce, and Pope Victor then proceeded to excommunicate the refractory bishops. Peace was afterwards restored by the intervention of St. Irenæus, the great Bishop of Lyons; and the contending Churches remained in the practice of their own several rules, till the Councils of Arles and Nicæa, which happened nearly at the same time, and both in the earlier part of the fourth century. At the Council of Nicæa the Western rule was adopted as the law of Christendom.

As the British Church was represented, certainly at Arles, and possibly also at Nicæa, and was afterwards complimented by the Emperor Constantine for having come in to the Nicæan decrees,<sup>4</sup> it is not to be doubted that any irregularity in the point of Easter which may have afterwards prevailed in these islands was of later and of native growth. But indeed it does not appear that the British Church ever deviated into the Quartodeciman practice. It acquiesced in a medium between the Catholic and the schismatical observance; always keeping Easter on a Sunday, but not taking care to keep

<sup>4</sup> Vid. *supra*, p. 39.

clear of the actual 14th day of the moon. Thus its practice was semi-Catholic and semi-Judaizing.

Now, in one point of view, no doubt, it may be said, and with great truth, the less the difference the greater the schism. So far it was doubtless very inexcusable in the British Christians to break unity for what would have been a mere trifle, if wanton and wilful difference from Catholic rule can ever be such. Thus, however, it was ; and when St. Augustine proposed to them conformity on the point of Easter as one of the conditions of union with the See of Canterbury, and through it with the Chair of St. Peter, they demurred. Of three propositions, then, which St. Augustine submitted to the British delegates, this was the first.

The second point of discrepancy between British and Catholic practice upon which St. Augustine stood out, related to the Sacrament of Baptism. In what precise respect the British baptisms were irregular, does not clearly appear ; but as serious objection was taken by the Archbishop to their mode of administration, it may well be supposed that the irregularity was one which went to affect the essence of the Sacrament. For it does not seem that St. Augustine was in the least disposed to be captious and over-exacting. It is distinctly said by St. Bede that "in many respects the British Church acted at variance with ecclesiastical unity,"<sup>5</sup> so that St. Augustine selected the more prominent instances only. Now, when it is remembered, on the one hand, how jealous a watch the Catholic Church has ever exercised over the manner of celebrating the Sacraments, and, on the other, how little unbelievers and heretics, since they profane and set at nought the Sacraments themselves, are likely

<sup>5</sup> H. E. lib. ii. c. 2.

to appreciate this caution, it is surely no wonder either that St. Augustine should have made a stand upon this requirement, or that he should have been regarded by many critics as a mere formalist and trifler for so doing.

St. Augustine's third stipulation was, that the British bishops should co-operate with him in the conversion of the Saxons. It is not quite plain whether by this proposal St. Augustine meant to require any subjection, on the part of the British bishops, to his authority as Archbishop of Canterbury and representative in England of the Roman See; whether, in short, he proposed that in converting the Saxons, the bishops of Britain should act *under* him, or merely *with* him. Protestant writers are accustomed to say the former, while Catholics maintain, as if controversially, the latter. The one make it a charge against the Saint that he was arrogant and imperious; the other defend him, of course, against this charge, and consider that he waived the right with which St. Gregory had formally invested him, as a matter of spiritual policy, and for unity and charity's sake. If the latter were indeed the fact, it sets the refusal of the British bishops in this particular in all the more unfavourable light, as, in that case, to all appearance, a mere gratuitous and wholly inexcusable breach of Christian unity. If, on the other hand, St. Augustine, as Protestants say, claimed power over the British bishops in the name and on the behalf of St. Peter, this again, though it goes some way towards exculpating the refractory bishops of Britain, is, for other reasons, a serious consideration. The professors of Protestantism can afford to make such admissions without misgiving; but the thoughtful student of ecclesiastical antiquity cannot forget that the transaction belongs to a period all but within those earlier centuries of Christianity, whose pre-

cedents the greatest divines of the Church of England have been accustomed to treat with respect and deference. It is the business of the historian or biographer, as such, in however humble a line, to exhibit facts, not to adjudicate between parties ; and it is earnestly hoped that in the present instance no departure from this principle has been consciously admitted.

At any rate, and from whatever cause, whether as a determined, and, as we may trust, conscientious assertion of independence, or, as enemies will say, in the spirit of rational exclusiveness, or in a peevish dislike of interference, or a childish love of doing things in their own way, or from any other less honourable motive, certain it is that the Britons were not disposed to retreat even so much as a single inch from the ground they had taken up. Not one point would they concede, even of the three very moderate and reasonable stipulations proposed to them ; they declined to conform either to the Catholic rule of Easter, or to the practice in respect of Baptism ; and what makes their determination more apparent, not to say their obstinacy more glaring, they absolutely refused to co-operate with a brother-bishop in the conversion of their heathen neighbours.

At length the blessed Saint, finding all his arguments ineffectual, had recourse to a different expedient for subduing the refractory Britons. He determined to commit the cause to God. Mere argument seldom, if ever, does more than to draw out controversies into shape ; prayer it is which brings men together, or causes them to take each their side. It sifts, if it fails to combine ; and ever better than "vain janglings," or hollow compacts, are even severances, which leave us free, at least, from the temptations to compromise, and the "laborious indolence" of unprofitable and inter-

minable debate. And St. Augustine had now reached this point, "*laboriosi et longi certaminis finem*,"<sup>6</sup> when choice must be made between the alternatives of determining to agree, or agreeing to differ.

He accordingly closed the discussion by an invitation to prayer. The precise words of his prayer have come down to us, and it is what we should now call a "bidding" prayer. It ran as follows :—"Let us beseech God, who maketh men to be of one mind in an house, that He would vouchsafe, by heavenly notices, to put into our minds whether of these two traditions be the rather to be followed, and which be the true way of entrance for those who are seeking to hasten towards His Kingdom." And then he added :—"Let some sick be brought near, and by whosoever prayers he shall be healed, let the faith and works of that one be judged devout towards God, and an ensample for men to follow."

It was a feature in the piety of that age, or rather it is a feature of Catholic piety in every age, to believe in the doctrine of a "special Providence." This doctrine has no doubt been miserably abused by fanatics, and is liable, like all else that is distinctive of the Church, to a superstitious use at all times. That particular form of it, especially, according to which the success of a cause is made, under certain circumstances, the test of its righteousness, has shared the fate of other holy impressions of religious ages or miraculous systems ; it has outlived its generation, or travelled beyond the limits of its native soil or congenial atmosphere, and then, presenting itself among strangers, it has been ill-treated, because ill-understood, or has, perhaps, encountered at their hands some of the natural effects of an unamiable

<sup>6</sup> S. Bede, H. E. lib. ii. c. 2.

decrepitude, or an insulated strangeness. The peculiar method of judicial decision entitled "Trial by Battle," which has been abolished within the memory not of the oldest amongst us, was an obsolete and misshapen relic of this family, which, like some piece of ancient furniture, beautiful in its day and in its place, had grown out of date or out of fashion, and, far from suggesting any grateful idea, or exemplifying any high principle, had come to be regarded with a sort of contemptuous wonder, as a mere antiquarian curiosity.

A parallel instance to the present history is furnished in that part of the life of St. Germanus which has entered into the present biographical sketch.<sup>7</sup> St. Germanus, it will be remembered, established the Catholic Faith against heretics by the issue of the same criterion to which St. Augustine of Canterbury now appeals in vindication of the great principle of Catholic unity. St. Augustine, like St. Germanus, proposed to determine the question with his opponents by a miracle, and they, though, as we are told, with reluctance,<sup>8</sup> accepted the challenge. This reluctance certainly indicated mistrust in their own cause, and reflects an unsatisfactory light on their conduct in the discussion. However, they could not but consent; and accordingly, among the multitudes whom the fame of the great Archbishop, or the report of this eventful debate, had drawn to the spot, was speedily found an eager applicant for the Divine bounty, in the person of a blind Saxon. He was taken first to the British clergy, and, upon the failure of their attempts to heal him, was brought to St. Augustine. Then the Saint, falling on his knees, entreated of the Divine goodness that He would grant eyes to the blind,

<sup>7</sup> Vid. *supra*, p. 30.

<sup>8</sup> *Adversarii, inviti licet, concesserunt.*

and through means of his corporeal light extend the blessings of spiritual illumination to many. Immediately his sight was restored, and the whole multitude proclaimed that Augustine was a man of God, and a preacher of the true Way. Even the Britons assented, but added that it was a hard thing to forsake the tradition of one's forefathers. The sympathies of the heart cannot at once bend to the convictions of the understanding. Who can or would wish to deny it? They asked time for deliberation, and consultation with the men in authority among them, which was readily granted. And thus terminated the first Conference of Augustinaes-ac.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## SECOND CONFERENCE.

THE parties separated upon the understanding that the Conference was to be renewed. The questions raised were too great to be determined at once ; the British Christians could not but see that, however secondary the concessions required of them, the points in debate could not be yielded without involving very fundamental changes in their ecclesiastical condition. The proposals, at all events, had taken them in some measure by surprise ; the proceedings at the first Conference had been more or less abrupt and tumultuary ; the representation of their Church was inadequate ; they wanted leisure for consideration, with the opportunity of taking counsel in prudent quarters, and of rallying their forces for a second and final encounter.

The British Church, notwithstanding its depression, furnished at this time specimens of the religious state both in community and in solitude. Of the former kind was the great monastery of Bancor, in Flintshire, sometimes confounded with Bangor, in Caernarvonshire. This monastery was in a very prosperous condition, being tenanted by no less than 2100 monks, drawn no doubt from the Scottish and Irish Churches in communion with the ancient British. And it seems to have been strictly ordered as well as flourishing ; the monks being distributed into seven classes, who took it by turns to conduct the Divine office in choir. The name of the



abbot at this time was Dinoot or Dinoth ; and he commanded, it is said, not less by his high theological acquirements, than by his prominent station, the universal respect of the Church. He therefore was at once taken into consultation upon the important subject of the late Conference, and engaged to be present at its reassembling on a given day.

But one there was whose judgment carried yet more of oracular weight with the Church of his time. This was an ancient solitary, whose abode the Welsh reader, or the reader who is familiar with Wales, will fix, in his imagination, in some secluded glen of the Alpine district of Caernarvon or Merioneth, where placid lake or gurgling stream would furnish to the hand the scant and primitive repast, and howling winds make silence audible, and some 'giant brotherhood' of mountains seem to keep sentinel against the intrusion of the world. Little recked he of strifes and debates, of subtle questions and high controversies ; content if haply he might learn day by day to solve that one chief problem whose solution is at last the triumph of all spiritual skill, the saving of one's own soul. Each member has his own office in Christ's body ; and the work of hermits is to combat the world not by the weapons, legitimate and needful as they are, of deep penetrative wisdom and argumentative power, and dexterous ecclesiastical tact, but by the violence of prayer and the silent logic of holy living. Yet in simple times,—nay, and with guileless minds in every time, such marvels of sanctity will ever be invested with somewhat of the dignity of oracles ; the very romance which surrounds them will be favourable to their influence ; and no doubt, as compared with mere cleverness, the "harmlessness of the dove" is as much better a guide in practical matters, as, in the

same subjects, the "wisdom of the serpent" in union with that same singleness of heart and eye, is superior to both.

Our solitary of the Cambrian desert had to pay the forfeit of his great celebrity. One day, and to all appearance like other days, when dreaming, perhaps, of nothing less, his privacy was invaded by a party of grave inquirers, and his powers of discrimination taxed, as we may say, beyond all warrant, to determine a question meeter for Pope or Council, than for a private Christian like himself. Upon the issue of that question it depended whether thousands of Christians scattered in different parts of the British isles should at once be linked to the centre of unity, or remain, perhaps for centuries, to say the least, in a very equivocal position. Yet who shall deny that there is something very attractive to the imagination, and even congenial to the moral and spiritual instinct in this recourse, under circumstances of difficulty, to such a man of God? Who shall question that there is something most thoroughly unworldly about it? Who can fail to trace in it a recognition of the power of prayer, an homage to the majesty of holiness? In truth, when churches are insulated and crippled, as that of ancient Britain was, individual sanctity will be ever apt to supply the place of an ultimate authority, and its verbal expressions be accepted almost as the accents of a voice from the other world.

The response from the hermit's cell was just of the kind which might have been expected; full of sweet simplicity, and obviously wanting in practical wisdom. "If he be a man of God, follow him." "But how," rejoined the inquirers, "shall we prove that he is such?" "The Lord," was the answer, "hath said, 'Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in

heart.' And if Augustine be meek and lowly, belike he beareth Christ's yoke himself, and proposeth to you to bear it. But, contrariwise, if he be cruel and proud, then, of a surety, no man of God is he, nor do his words concern us." "But how," persisted they, "are we to know this also?" "Cause," was the answer, "that he and his come first to the place of meeting, and if he rise as you draw near, then know that he is the servant of Christ, and hear, and obey him. But if he make light of you, and forbear to rise as ye come in, being more in number, then my counsel is that ye too make light of him." Thereupon the deputies withdrew, promising compliance with the suggestion.

Truly such simplicity has almost the air of craft; this criterion of humility upon which, in the innocence of his heart, and as if for want of a better, the good hermit stumbles, savours almost of the spirit of the world. And perhaps this is not the only instance in which one Christian quality, apart from its corrective, may even wear the semblance, and work the results, of its very opposite. The moral and spiritual virtues must be balanced to prevent an overthrow. Where was it ever heard but in the courts of princes and the halls of fashion, that peace and love should be marred for the sake of an etiquette? Doubtless the Church has her "etiquettes," her minute and delicate proprieties, as well as the world; but to lay stress on them, to reckon upon them with carefulness, or to be absorbed by them, or even to think of them a second time, this belongs rather to the spirit of the world than of the Church. Little thought the apostle of England what mighty results for good or for ill depended upon the performance or neglect of that complimentary gesture.

The second Synod was conducted with far greater

solemnity than the first. The representation of the British Church was more complete, and the proceedings, it would appear, more regular. The Archbishop was attended, as on the former occasion, by SS. Melitus and Justus, who were, probably, even at that time, designated to their respective sees of London and Rochester. He came, too, in his pontifical robes, with the ensign of metropolitan rank with which he had lately been invested. On the other side there are said to have been no fewer than seven bishops, though it does not appear that more than three sees were at the time occupied in Wales; that is to say, St. David's, Elwy (afterwards St. Asaph's), and Llandaff. If more than three bishops were present, the remainder must have come from some of the adjoining counties, which were possibly at that early period included within the Welsh frontier. Historians pronounce that there was then no archbishop in Wales; Caerleon having merged in Llandaff, and the last Archbishop of Menevia having carried the pall over sea into Lesser Brittany in the year 560. Among the British deputies present at the Council was the venerable Dinoh, abbot of Bancor.

The issue of the Conference was practically determined by the mode of reception which the Archbishop of Canterbury adopted towards the representatives of the British Church. As a fact, he received them sitting. Different reasons have been assigned for this apparent discourtesy, of which that which has principally obtained is that such practice is, after all, in accordance with ecclesiastical rule. A great precedent is quoted in the case of St. Cyril at the Council of Ephesus. It is said that where a synod is conducted in due form, with the presiding bishop *in pontificalibus*, the act of rising at the entrance of each deputy would create an incon-

venient disturbance. Or it may have been that St. Augustine was an archbishop, and the delegates of the British Church merely bishops. Or, that the Archbishop of Canterbury really designed to vindicate his authority as the representative of the Holy See. Or that his mind was at the moment occupied on graver subjects than matters of external politeness, and that he thus omitted, through inadvertency, an act of proper consideration. Certain only it is that what was at worst but an excusable negligence, was taken as a serious insult. "Immediately," says the historian, "they became incensed, and esteeming it an act of haughtiness, set themselves to contradict all he said."<sup>1</sup> It must be acknowledged that the British bishops did themselves no credit by taking such a trifle so much to heart. The affair must strike every reasonable and candid person as simply childish; though perhaps not a little of this character is derived from the state of the times.

The calm demeanour and temperate policy of the great Archbishop, shows to advantage by contrast with the peevish and narrow-minded spirit in which his overtures were met. "Truly," was his address, "your customs are in many respects at variance with our own,—nay, with all Catholic practice. Howbeit, if you will comply with my injunctions<sup>2</sup> in three particulars, we will patiently bear with all your contrarieties to the tradition of the Church. And these three are, 1. That you will celebrate the Paschal Festival at the canonical time. 2. That you will supply, in conformity to the holy Apostolic and Roman Church, certain defects in your manner of administering the Sacrament of Baptism, wherein we are born anew to God. 3. That you will

<sup>1</sup> S. Bede, H. E. lib. ii. c. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Obtemperare.

join with us in preaching the Word of God to the English nation."

To this moderate request the indignant Britons replied, "We will do none of these things; moreover we will not have you for archbishop." And then turning to one another they murmured, "If he would not rise up as we entered, what chance shall we have of respect from him if we acknowledge his authority over us?"

Now it certainly does not appear that the Archbishop directly stipulated for the obedience of the British bishops. Perhaps, however, their sensitive ears caught at the word "*obtemperare*" though it certainly fell very short of a claim of universal authority. It is generally thought that their apprehensions and suspicions outran the occasion, and that they were resolved upon putting an end to the controversy at once by a gratuitous manifestation of independence, which sounds not a little like a very uncalled-for expression of disrespect. Because they would not have St. Augustine for their archbishop, they seem to have treated him almost as if he had been no bishop at all.

There is, indeed, a story which finds credit with some historians, but of which the grounds are generally confessed to be at least doubtful; according to which the answer of the British bishops was at once more definite and more respectful. It is said that by the mouth of Dinoh their prolocutor, the deputies rejoined, "That the British Churches owe the deference of brotherly kindness and charity to the Pope of Rome, and to all Christians. But other obedience than this they do not know to be due to him whom they call Pope, and, for their parts, they were under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Caerleon upon Usk who, under God, was their spiritual overseer and director."

On the ears of the present writer this document strikes as too precise and controversial for the time ; as rather savouring of anti-Catholic polemics than of primeval *naïveté*, as rather a speech written *for* the ancient Britons, and embodying its framer's views of historical probability, than as a record whose internal evidence is calculated to accredit it. Collier, indeed, accepts it upon the authority of Sir Henry Spelman, "who sets it down in Welsh, English, and Latin, and tells us he had it from Mr. Peter Mostyn, a Welsh gentleman." One serious internal objection, at all events, lies in its way, which is, that the metropolitical jurisdiction of the Welsh Church had been transferred from Caerleon upon Usk to Menevia since the time of Dubricius. It is answered that the rights of the see of Menevia were never recognized universally in the British Church, and that Caerleon still preserved a kind of traditional claim upon the deference of its suffragans. Still, it seems plain that in the time of St. Augustine the metropolitan see of Caerleon had at best but a sort of ideal existence, which it would certainly seem strange to so have pleaded in opposition to a claim so apparent and venerable as that of the See of Canterbury. On the whole it is, perhaps, safest to confine our regard to the simple and graphic narrative of our own Catholic historian.

It will have been observed that the British bishops now gave in their final refusal of St. Augustine's conditions. Some Protestant historians appear to find great difficulty in defending the Britons from the charge of indifference to the religious welfare of their Saxon neighbours. Their resistance on the points of order and custom is often thought to require but little explanation ; though, in fact, if the intensity of the schismatical spirit is at all to be measured by the insignificance

of the temptation to a breach of unity, the opposition of the British bishops on the ceremonial questions should be taken as a peculiarly decisive mark of their attachment to the principles of independence. But there is something, no doubt, which suggests even a far more painful impression of the British Church in the reluctance which its representatives manifested on the subject of the Saxon mission. The vindication set up by some writers in their behalf is in the highest degree unworthy of grave and sensible men. It is said that St. Augustine had disqualified himself from pleading the cause of the poor Saxons in the presence of the British delegates by having failed to press upon those Saxons, in the name and with the authority of the Holy See, the duty of restoring the conquered territory to its original possessors. A more remarkable instance of inconsistency and extravagance than is presented by this apology cannot well be conceived. Perhaps if there be one charge which is more commonly preferred than another against the Christian policy of Rome, it is that of her disposition to meddle in international politics. Her line of conduct in this respect is often invidiously contrasted with that of the Apostolic Church. The account of any real differences between the policy of the earlier and later Church is of course to be found in the altered circumstances of the world since the wider spread of Christianity and the reception of whole nations into the fold of Christ. But never, surely, has the Holy See departed so far from the maxims of Apostolic Christianity as to commit itself to such a system of gratuitous interference with national arrangements as would tend to throw all the rights of property into confusion, and keep the whole civilized world in a perpetual state of change and commotion. This most preposterous conception then



being done away, there really would not appear to have been any even plausible reason for the coldness with which the great Archbishop's zealous and charitable offer was received. <sup>3</sup>

The issue of the Conference being thus disastrous as respected the interests of Catholic unity, the Archbishop rose and departed. On quitting the assembly he delivered his mind in a solemn and startling prediction. "If," said he, addressing the dissatisfied prelates in a tone which, according to his biographers, sounded like inspiration; "If you will not listen to my entreaties, now prepare yourselves for the terrors of a denunciation. I call you to peace, but you make yourselves ready to battle; bear, then, to be dealt with as enemies by those with whom you refuse to deal as brethren. You grudge your neighbours the word of eternal life. They will avenge themselves upon you by unsheathing against you the sword of temporal death."

This declaration of our great apostle has sometimes been called, rather invidiously, a *menace*. In a certain sense, no doubt, all the prophetic,—nay, and all the evangelical denunciations in holy Scripture may be so called. The Psalms of David, and even the Apostolical Epistles, contain many such menaces. Again, "Woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep;" this also, with its awful concomitants, is in a certain sense a solemn and terrible threat. Every prediction of punishment,—nay, and in some sort every deprecatory warning, admits of being called a threat, and is apt to receive that name at the hands of soft-minded men.

<sup>3</sup> It is said that the Bishop of Llandaff, who represented Caerleon also, submitted to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and that St. Oudoceus, successor of St. Theliau, who was Bishop at this time, received consecration at Canterbury from St. Augustine. Vide Ussher.

And thus, ere now, unbelievers or heretics have dared to speak of portions even of the holy Scriptures, as what they term "vindictive." Considering where such impieties have sought out their objects, and in what kind of results they have sometimes issued, it is a small thing indeed that a Saint of the Church should sustain (under whatever hopeful circumstances of invincible ignorance) such irreverent, that we may not say blasphemous, imputations. Meanwhile, the Church, of course, esteems all her chief lights to be sharers, in their measure, of the prophetic Spirit. And of them who are far less than her burning and shining lights,—of all her ordinary priests, she believes that they are clothed from on high with power to bind as well as to loose; and if so be that in this behaviour of the British Christians there were aught of wilful opposition to Divine grace, (as who shall say that there certainly was not?) it may have been that God would have them a warning to His Church, by inflicting on them some conspicuous chastisement, whereby at once others might be made more fearful of offending, and their own souls ripened for glory by one sharp and critical pang of intermediate suffering.

A sharp and stinging chastisement it was, and a conspicuous example withal. It shall be recounted in the words of St. Bede.

"Through effect of a Divine judgment, the prophecy was to the minutest particular brought to pass. For, after these things, Ethelfrid, the valiant king of the Angles, of whom we have already spoken, got together a great army, and made a mighty slaughter of this perfidious people at the city of the Legions, which the Angles call Legacaestir, but the British, more properly, Caer-legion. When, as the battle was about to begin, he saw their priests, who had met together to offer prayers for

their commander, standing apart in a place of safety, he inquired who they might be, and with what object they had assembled there. Now, very many of these priests were attached to Bancor monastery, in which there is related to have been such a number of monks, that, albeit the monastery was divided into seven portions, each portion having its immediate superior; not any one of these portions contained fewer than three hundred men, all of whom were accustomed to live by the labour of their hands. It so happened that a great party of these monks, after a three days' fast, had repaired, along with other persons, to the scene of the afore-mentioned battle with the view of offering prayers. Their protector, who guarded them while engaged in their devotions from the swords of the enemy, was one Brocmail. When king Ethelfrid was made acquainted with the reason of their coming, he cried, 'Of a truth, since these are praying to their God against us, they are fighting against us, albeit they wear no arms, since they are using against us this weapon of their imprecations.' Accordingly he bade his troops turn their arms in the very outset against these men, and so destroyed, not without great loss on his own side, the remaining forces of this hateful<sup>4</sup> band. It is said that there were killed, in that engagement, of those who came to pray, about twelve hundred men, and that fifty alone were saved by flight. As for Brocmail, he and his party betook themselves to flight at the very first onset of the enemy, and left those whom he was bound to have protected, weak and defenceless, and a ready prey to the sword of the slayer. Thus was fulfilled the presage of the holy bishop Augustine, albeit himself translated to the hea-

<sup>4</sup> Nefandæ.

venly courts long before. And so these traitors to the Church<sup>5</sup> received the vengeance of temporal death for having despised counsels so profitable to their souls' eternal health."<sup>6</sup>

We have scarcely ventured to give the full force of the original, through a fear of shocking prejudices, even though by the words of another, and that other a great and famous Catholic historian. Many of those around us can ill brook the language in which Catholics describe the sin of schism. Many, also, are fain to espouse these ancient British Christians as champions of an important principle, and exemplifiers of an advantageous precedent. And of the present biographical sketches, the object is not to foment divisions, but to promote charity, and no otherwise to enforce a side in controversy, than by the impartial display of facts.

On the other hand, the ancient British Church has been the object of unfairly adverse, as well as unfairly eulogistic representations ; among which is a charge brought against it, or, at the least, a suspicion raised with respect to it, by the historian Milner, of a tendency to Pelagianism.<sup>7</sup> But, indeed, it were derogatory to the work of the great St. German, to suppose that the noxious weeds of that presumptuous heresy had not long since been extirpated from British soil. And, as a fact, St. Augustine's selection of charges against the British Church on the score of merely ceremonial irregu-

<sup>5</sup> Perfidii.

<sup>6</sup> The words of the original are even stronger ; "*quod oblata sibi perpetuæ salutis consilia spreverunt.*"

<sup>7</sup> The present writer cannot forbear, however, from paying his tribute, such as it may be, of gratitude and respect to this Protestant historian for the religious candour with which he seeks to do justice in the present, as in many other instances, to the Saints of the Church.

larity, must be taken as an acquittal upon the whole subject of doctrine. The only point of charge to create uneasiness on this score, is that which relates to Baptism ; but farther inquiry leads the present writer to hope that he was premature<sup>8</sup> in supposing the irregularities which had crept into the British Church to be such as might probably affect the essence of the Sacrament. Cressy throws out a hopeful suggestion, to the effect that they more probably related to some discrepancy from the Catholic Church as to the seasons of administration, or the length of time allowed for the instruction of catechumens.

The Caerleon mentioned in the above extract from St. Bede is not Caerleon upon Usk, but Chester. As to Bancor, the seat of the great British monastery, a kind friend, thoroughly versed in the topography of Wales, and the neighbouring counties, writes to the author in the following words :—" I have no doubt that the place in question is Bangor Monachorum in the hundred of Maelor, a detached portion of Flintshire bordering on Shropshire. Bangor is a parish, lying about four miles from Wrexham, and upon the high road from thence to Whitchurch, close to the river Dee. There are, however, no traces of high antiquity in the place, and the church has been in a great measure rebuilt."

<sup>8</sup> Vid. *supra*, p. 215.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## ST. AUGUSTINE.—HIS LATTER YEARS.

It was now made plain that St. Augustine and his companions would have to prosecute their missionary labours single-handed. And although the Saint's earthly time was rapidly drawing to its close, those labours could hardly be considered to have as yet more than begun. What has been remarked of other Saints is peculiarly true of St. Augustine of Canterbury. His characteristic work in the Church was shut up in a comparatively brief time. His life, till he had passed middle age, was hidden from the world. His ministry was comprised in little more than ten years, and of these, eventful as were all of them, the three latter would seem to have been the most critical of all. St. Augustine was in the number of those Saints who lived more than half their days to God, and but a few of them only for man, excepting indeed as none can live to God without also living for man. But can we wonder that the lives of the Saints should be miniatures, so to speak, of the life of our Blessed Lord? Of Him also we know but little till He began to be about thirty years of age. His work for men, so far as it was visible, was accomplished in little more than three years, while what may perhaps be called, without irreverence, the awful and determining crisis, was of yet shorter duration.

The circumstances of St. Augustine's later life, with the exception of some few leading facts, are involved in

a good deal of historical uncertainty. The historian whose name carries the greatest weight with critics and antiquaries, St. Bede the Venerable, sums up the period subsequent to the Second Conference with the Britons in one or two chapters. The wide interstices in St. Bede's narrative are filled up by Gocelin, but this biographer rather no doubt represents the *idea* of the Saint, upon which the Church Catholic has always fed, than admits of being substantiated by proofs satisfactory to the learned inquirer. It may perhaps be questioned whether any history can pass from the character of a mere chronicle without becoming more or less of a romance ; certainly it is not pretended with respect to these Lives that they do, or that they can, rest in each several particular upon producible evidence. All which is professed with respect to them is, that the laws by which all historical writing is regulated are not here consciously violated. Let it be considered whether the great staple of the evidence upon which all history depends is not what falls under the department of verisimilitude rather than of legal proof. And then let it also be considered, whether many of the objections made against hagiography do not ultimately resolve themselves into objections rather to the *subject-matter* than to the grounds upon which it is supported. When it is once fairly admitted that the subject is miraculous, we gain a great step towards the acknowledgment that the evidence is not untrustworthy. Still it seems but honest to inform the reader that we are now taking him off the firm basis of historical certainty which we have latterly been treading, and launching him for the moment upon a more impalpable surface, where we do not say that his footing will be less secure, but where he must expect to find less to sustain it in the mere groundwork of the argument.

Ancient biographers of St. Augustine have related, that before returning to his metropolitan see he passed some time in the western counties of England, and especially in Dorsetshire. It is in his progress from the north to the west that we suppose him to have conferred with the British delegates on the Welsh frontier. The accounts in question also represent St. Augustine's great trial as having come about in the course of his western expedition. His journey to the north was, as we have already described it, more of the nature of a triumphant progress than of a Christian mission ; though of the spirit of mortification with which it was undertaken and carried on we are not left in ignorance, from the fact of the Archbishop himself having appeared everywhere on foot, if not even, as some authorities seem to indicate, barefoot. Still there is no record, nor even tradition, of his reception in the north of England having been otherwise than favourable, and even hearty. Very different from this are the accounts of his travels in Dorsetshire. While there, we hear of his having come to one village where he was received with every species of insult. The wretched people, not content with heaping abusive words upon the holy visitors, assailed them with missiles, in which work, the place being probably a seaport, the sellers of fish are related to have been peculiarly active. Hands, too, were laid upon the archbishop and his company. Finding all efforts useless, the godly band shook off the dust from their feet and withdrew. The inhabitants are said to have suffered the penalty of their impieties even to distant generations. All the children born from that time bore, and transmitted, the traces of their parents' sin in the shape of a loathsome deformity.

At another place the missionaries are said to have



encountered still worse usage. The people, from the account, seem to have been devils in human shape. They rejected the servants of God almost in the very words in which the possessed of old repudiated the Holiest ; they said, almost in terms, " What have we to do with you ? Depart from us, we know you not." They spoke,—so the report goes—of being in league with the author of death. Some took up sharp weapons, and flew upon the defenceless missionaries ; others seized torches with the view of setting fire to them. The Saint continued to preach ; whereupon, awe-struck, the murderers paused, even as the emissaries of the high priest and elders fell to the ground at the sight of the Blessed. They paused, but only to renew their violence in another shape. Now they shot out their arrows, even bitter words. The godly admonitions of the preacher they returned by blasphemous jeers. What could he do ? From preaching he turned to prayer, and besought Christ to bring his adversaries to a better mind. No long time passed before the whole population was attacked by a dreadful and supernatural malady. Men and women, old and young, were affected with burning cancerous ulcerations of the whole body. The punishment was as universal as the sin. One cry of agony pervaded the town.

This visitation wrought blessed effects. It spoke for itself, and it made itself heard. All hearts were turned towards Augustine ; and he who was found to be among them for judgment, was felt to be among them for mercy as well. One after another they betook themselves to the archbishop and entreated his forgiveness. In the end multitudes both of men and women were baptized, and in the same blessed laver wherein their sins were washed away, the fire which raged throughout their bodies was also extinguished.

Soon afterwards St. Augustine and his comrades left the place ; and on coming to a retired spot, five miles distant, where they seemed to be "in a barren and dry land," where were no waters of refreshment, our Lord is said to have communicated Himself to the Saint by special revelation. At the same time, as if significant of the gracious manifestation, a spring of water gushed forth, and distributing itself into various rivulets, soon converted the wilderness into a garden. St. Augustine called the place Cernel, as one where he had been vouchsafed a sight of God.<sup>1</sup> This spot was afterwards the site of the monastery of Cerne, or Cerne-abbas, in Dorsetshire. It is related that, at a subsequent time, an abbot of Cernel, when at the point of death, received a cure at the miraculous spring, by which St. Augustine's great spiritual refreshment was commemorated, that Saint himself appearing to stand by the abbot's side

<sup>1</sup> Malmesbury's account is as follows :—He says that St. Augustine having converted Kent to the Christian Faith, travelled through the rest of the English provinces as far as king Ethelbert's dominions extended, which was through all England, except Northumberland ; having arrived at Cernel, the inhabitants treated him and his companions with great rudeness, fastened the tails of rays ("caudas racharum") to their garments, and drove them to a considerable distance from the place. The Saint, however, foresaw the change which was likely to ensue, and cried to his companions "*Cerno Deum qui et nobis retribuit gratiam et furentibus illis emendatiorem infundet animam.*" The people repented of what they had done, asked pardon for their conduct, and requested his return. He, imputing this change to the hand of God, gave to this place the name of Cernel, compounded of the Hebrew word *Hel*, or *El*, God, and the Latin *cerno*. The conversion of the people followed, and when water was wanting to baptize them, a spring broke out at his command. There are other interpretations. Gocelin's account, which is followed in the text, is somewhat different. The incident of the fishes' tails is by him connected with the visit to a different place.

as the director of his steps, and the providential instrument of blessing.<sup>2</sup>

St. Augustine having at length perambulated the whole extent of king Ethelbert's dominions, which comprised England south of Northumberland, with the exception of the extreme west, which was in the occupation of the British, at length returned to his metropolitan see, and there closed his days on earth. There is indeed a tradition of his having visited Ireland at some period of his life, and made his way to the court of king Coloman, where, as the account proceeds, he preached the Word of Life, and finally received into the Church the king, queen, and principal persons of the court. There, also, he is said to have made a convert of Livinus, who was afterwards accounted a Saint in the English Church.<sup>3</sup>

We now return into the field of authentic history. Soon after St. Augustine's re-establishment at Canterbury, Sebert, king of Essex, made overtures to king Ethelbert, on the subject of embracing the Christian Faith. Sebert, also called Seberct, or Sigebert, was the nephew of king Ethelbert, his father having married Rricula, sister of that prince. King Sebert's dominions immediately joined those of his uncle, upon whom, like all the other princes of the Heptarchy, he was dependent.

<sup>2</sup> In his way from Dorsetshire to Canterbury, St. Augustine is believed to have remained some time in the neighbourhood of Oxford. In the Bodleian Library is a MS. of not later date than the thirteenth century, containing a remarkable history of the Saint's interview at Cumnor with a priest and layman of the neighbourhood, on the subject of tithes, with miraculous circumstances which followed upon it. The story is also given in the Bollandist collection. It has been thought best to print a fac simile of this MS. in an appendix.

<sup>3</sup> Gocelin apud Mabillon, Acta S. O. B.

King Ethelbert laid his nephew's request before the Archbishop, who answered it by sending to him Mellitus and other preachers. Not content, however, with this proof of interest, he soon repaired himself to the court of king Sebert, and baptized him with his own hands. The conversion of the king of Essex made an opening for the consecration of St. Mellitus to the bishopric of London. At the same time the foundation was laid of the two great metropolitan churches of St. Paul's and Westminster, concerning which it will fall to the biographer of St. Mellitus to speak at greater length. The same year (according to St. Bede, 604,) St. Justus was consecrated Bishop of Rochester, where king Ethelbert built and richly endowed the cathedral church of St. Andrew.

This year (604) died St. Gregory the First and Great. For many years he had suffered from great weakness of the chest and stomach, and was also afflicted with slow fevers and frequent fits of the gout, which once confined him to his bed two whole years. One of his last acts was to give to the church of St. Paul several parcels of land in order to furnish it with lights ; the act of donation is said to remain on record in the church to this day. " God called him to Himself," writes the Rev. Alban Butler, " on the 12th of March, about the sixty-fourth year of his age, after he had governed the Church thirteen years, six months, and ten days. His pallium, the reliquary he wore round his neck, and his girdle were preserved long after his death, when John the Deacon wrote, who describes his picture drawn from the life, then to be seen in the monastery of St. Andrew. His holy remains rest in the Vatican church. Both the Greeks and the Latins honour his name. The Council of Cliff or Cloveshoe, under Archbishop Cuthbert, in 747, com-

manded his Feast to be observed in all the monasteries in England, which the Council of Oxford, in 1222, extended to the whole kingdom. This law subsisted till the change of religion."

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## ST. AUGUSTINE.—HIS DEATH.

ST. AUGUSTINE did not long tarry behind his blessed Father in the Faith. He fell asleep in Christ either the same year with St. Gregory, or a year or two afterwards. The last great work of his life was to consecrate Laurence, one of his original companions, and one of the two who were sent to Rome in quest of fresh missionaries, his successor in the See of Canterbury; thus following the example of St. Peter, who, before his departure hence, made a like provision for the necessities of the infant Church of Rome, by ordaining St. Clement to succeed him. It is said that St. Augustine summoned to his death-bed his great benefactor, king Ethelbert, with the members of the royal family, the new Archbishop, several of the clergy, and other persons, and that he died with benedictions and exhortations on his lips. "*Pretiosa in conspectu Domini mors Sanctorum Ejus!*" Oh, with what thrilling hope and bright foretastes of blessedness does the Church accompany such a soul as this in its passage to the fulness of joy! What sweetness and what power does the death of the just impart to those words of comfort, which the Church denies not to an ordinary faithful! "May the bright company of the angels meet thy soul as it leaves the body; may the conclave of the Apostles, who shall judge the world, come to receive thee; may the triumphal army of the martyrs go forth to greet thee; may the lilies band of

confessors, shining with glory, encompass thee ; may the chorus of virgins hail thee with songs of joy ; and mayest thou be held fast, deep in the blessings of peace, in the bosom of the patriarchs. May Christ Jesus cast on thee His mild and festive look, and, in the company of those who stand near him, acknowledge thee as His own for ever! . . . . Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered ; let them also that hate Him flee before Him. Like as the smoke vanisheth, so shalt Thou drive them away ; and like as wax melteth at the fire, so let the ungodly perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad and rejoice before God. . . . Let all the legions of hell be confounded and put to shame, nor let the ministers of Satan dare to oppose thy passage. May Christ deliver thee from everlasting death, who deigned to die for thee. May Christ, the Son of the Living God, place thee in the midst of the ever-verdant gardens of His Paradise, and may He, the true Shepherd, acknowledge thee among His sheep. May He absolve thee from all thy sins, and place thee at His own right hand among the number of His elect. Mayest thou see thy Redeemer face to face, and, standing for ever by His side, mayest thou behold with happy eyes His Truth in all its brightness. Mayest thou be ranged with the multitudes of the blessed, and enjoy the sweetness of the vision of God for ever and ever." <sup>1</sup>

His body is buried in peace ; his name liveth for evermore. Such is the portion of the blessed Saints in the Church on earth, while their immortal spirit is received at once into the courts above, to re-enter its glorified tabernacle at the resurrection of the just. The sacred ashes of St. Augustine were deposited in a

<sup>1</sup> Ordo Commendationis Animæ secundum Breviarium Romanum.

grave as near as might be to the unfinished church of St. Peter and St. Paul at Canterbury, waiting the completion of the fabric. When the church was at length capable of receiving them, they were removed within the northern porch, which from that time became the burying-place of all future archbishops of Canterbury till the time of Theodore and Berthwald, who were buried further within the church, the porch being then full. The church of St. Peter and St. Paul, which was an appendage to the monastery dedicated under the same title, and afterwards St. Augustine's, was completed, according to Thorn, in 613, in which year the body of St. Augustine was interred in its portico. In the midst of it, as St. Bede relates, was an altar sacred to St. Gregory the Great, at which every Saturday Mass was said in commemoration both of St. Gregory and St. Augustine, by a priest specially chosen for that office. At the Council of Cloveshoe, in 747, it was directed that due honours should be paid to the days both of St. Augustine's nativity and of his death.

His tomb bore the following simple inscription in the days of St. Bede.

"Here resteth the Lord Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, who erewhile was sent hither by blessed Gregory, Bishop of the City of Rome, and, being helped by God to work miracles, drew over king Ethelbert and his race from the worship of idols to the Faith of Christ. Having ended in peace the days of his ministry, he departed hence seven days before the kalends of June (May 26), in the reign of the same king."

The remains of St. Augustine were afterwards, as we have said, removed into the north porch of the cathedral of Christ Church, which, in 759, received the body of



Archbishop Cuthbert, and continued to be the burying-place of the archbishops of Canterbury till the change of religion. On the 6th of September, 1091, Abbot Wido translated the chief part of the relics into the interior of the church, leaving the remainder in the porch. Those which were translated lay for some time in a strong urn under the east window. In 1221, the head was put into a rich shrine ornamented with gold and precious stones ; the rest of the bones lay in a marble tomb, enriched with fine carvings and engravings, till the dissolution.<sup>2</sup> The history of the Translation has been written at length by Gocelin, the biographer of St. Augustine.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. A. Butler.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## POSTHUMOUS MIRACLES.—CONCLUSION.

ST. AUGUSTINE's biographer, Gocelin, has left a book on Miracles wrought since the death of the Saint through the power of his relics or by the help of his intercessions. The readers of these Lives have not to be told now, for the first time, that the Church Catholic has ever accounted a singular virtue to reside in the bodies of Saints, the temples of the Holy Ghost, even after the spirit has left them to return to God who gave it. Holy Scripture distinctly warrants this comfortable belief; for if the bones of one of the elder prophets were gifted with the power of conveying life to the dead,<sup>1</sup> how much more should miraculous virtue be expected to cleave to the relics of those blessed shrines in which the Holy Ghost has dwelt in all the largeness of measure which is promised under the Gospel! A wonderful and glorious truth is contained in that promise, of which the Athanasian Creed is the vehicle to the Church of all ages, "*Omnes homines resurgere habent cum corporibus suis.*" These very bodies of ours, and not merely the souls which inhabit them, are gifted with immortality, the especial fruit, as Catholic writers tell us, of participation in Christ through the Sacrament of His most blessed Body and Blood. But if a certain sanctity inhere in all the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings xiii. 21.

bodies of the dead in Christ, as essentially the very same with which they shall rise again at His Coming, what shall be thought of the bodies of the Saints, which, even in this life, have been purified as by fire from the dross of corruption, and are the terrestrial correspondents of souls now with Christ in Heaven? Often they are related upon competent testimony to have been miraculously preserved from decay; Almighty God thus giving a token to them that fear Him of the power by which He will finally re-unite the scattered portions of consecrated dust, so as to maintain the integrity of each tabernacle which His Spirit has once pervaded.

Hence, not only the relics of the Saints, but the very neighbourhoods of the spots where they rest, have ever been looked upon as instinct with miraculous life. As for the great Apostle of the English, almost more wonders are related of him after his death than before it; which, should it prove to be a fact, would be quite in keeping with all experience. For how commonly is it felt even with respect to eminent Christians short of the Saints of the Church, and with respect also to influences short of what would be generally termed miraculous, that their power upon the world almost dates from the termination of their visible connexion with it! Death seems, in a most mysterious way, the period of their birth into life; not merely their own true life, which was here but hidden and interrupted, but even their life in this world. Neither for themselves, nor even for others, do they often seem to have lived to good purpose till the veil of flesh has been withdrawn. Their *name* has a power about it which their words and actions seemed to lack; and what is the posthumous virtue of the Saints, but an exemplification of the same principle?

These and the like considerations will prepare even

the more sceptical to receive, at least with attention and reverence, the testimony of the biographer Gocelin to the miracles wrought at the tomb, or through the intercessions of St. Augustine. And when it is borne in mind that he was not far from contemporary with some of these events, and that his report of them admitted of easy refutation, his testimony should not seem untrustworthy even according to the ordinary laws of historical evidence. Thus, as to the very first of the miraculous stories which Gocelin relates, the date of the transaction to which it belongs is 1011, and Gocelin lived at the end of the same century. His account of it, too, was put forth at Canterbury, on the very spot where the miracle is said to have happened. The story is narrated by Thorn, who was Abbot of St. Augustine's, and will be found at pp. 137-8 of the present biography.

Gocelin likewise recounts the following, among other miracles, as having taken place at the tomb of St. Augustine of Canterbury, or under the immediate power of his patronage.

A Saxon, named Leodegarius, had been afflicted from his birth with dreadful contractions of the joints of his body, so as almost to resemble a monster rather than a human being. He is said to have passed many years of his life in moving, or rather creeping, from place to place, for, in truth, he wore the appearance of a reptile. He was a native of Germany, whence he had found his way to Rome, in hopes of benefiting by the prayers of some Saint. At length he came to England, and, one day, while watching during the night in the Abbey of St. Peter, at Westminster, he felt himself moved, by a Divine intimation, to seek help in the city of Canterbury.

The next morning found him on his way to the metropolitan city, which he is said to have reached, by taking ship at Greenwich, where, it seems, vessels were stationed for conveying the poor at the public charge.<sup>2</sup> On arriving at Canterbury, a pious matron took pity on him, and provided him with board and lodging for the night. The next day, under her guidance, he repaired to the cathedral, and there, through the intervention of his charitable hostess, was admitted within the sanctuary, or precincts of the high altar. In this place he spent three nights in prayer. On the fourth morning he met with the reward of his perseverance. There appeared to him (as he related) three venerable figures, of patriarchal aspect and mien, bright as angels. The central figure was much taller than the others. His hair was white as snow, and seemed to take the form of a cross upon his ample forehead; his eyes beamed with sweetness, and his whole countenance was radiant and smiling. A priestly robe covered his person, so gorgeous that it seemed to rival the glory of Solomon, and it was confined at the waste by a clasp of gold. In his hand was a cross of great size and dazzling brilliancy. His companion on the right was of middle stature, with eyes of remarkable brightness, and a forehead like snow. On his left was one of dwarfish size, as is recorded of him who desired to receive Christ into his house;<sup>3</sup> but his form was one of perfect symmetry and exquisite beauty. One and all were attired in vestments so rich and magnificent, that earth till then had never seen the like. The three strangers were observed to make for the spot where the poor cripple, with his limbs gathered up, was lying on the pavement. His infirmity was of such a

<sup>2</sup> Navis Eleemosynaria.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xix. 3.

kind as to render variety of posture impracticable ; standing, sitting, lying, and kneeling, were all alike to him.

On reaching him the strangers suddenly paused. The poor helpless creature gazed on them with an awe which came near to terror. At length the central priest beckoned to his companion on the left, to signify to the cripple that they came as ministers of mercy. He approached him and said, it was blessed Augustine who had come to heal him. Hardly had the name of Augustine passed his lips when the other seemed to hear God speaking to him, and addressing himself to the chief visitor, " It is you," he said, " most clement father, whom I seek ; you, of all the Saints, a Divine voice has told it me, are to be my deliverer." Thereupon St. Augustine deputed his two companions to exercise the gift of healing, and they proceeded to lift him up, the one applying the hand of power to the upper part of his body, the other implanting strength in his knees and ankle-bones. The cure is described as more painful than the malady. While it was in progress (for it was not instantaneous) the poor man, as we read, cried out lustily for mercy. At length his body, which had been a mass of disease and deformity, assumed its natural shape, and the three wonderful benefactors disappeared in the direction of their several tombs. Meanwhile, the sacristan and keepers of the church, who had been aroused from their sleep by cries of distress proceeding from the sanctuary, had repaired to the spot, where to their astonishment they found the poor man, whose hapless condition they had commiserated the day before, in the full possession of health and activity. He related to them the circumstances of his visit to Canterbury, and of his interview with the wonderful strangers ; and learned that the three shrines from which they had appeared to

issue, and among which his eyes had afterwards lost them, were those of St. Augustine and his two companions, St. Laurence, and St. Mellitus. These, then, were the strangers on right and left.

A great number of the miraculous narratives of which St. Augustine of Canterbury is the subject, have their scene on the wide ocean. In these civilized times when the art of navigation is in so advanced a state that a long sea voyage is hardly more dangerous and anxious than a journey on land, we can form no idea of the light in which even a passage across the British Channel would be regarded in the middle ages by any but those who had been trained to a seafaring life from their infancy. Even now it is commonly said that there is a wonderful power about a sea life in making men religious, or in keeping them so, especially in the case of those who have experience of it in its rougher shapes. Who has not heard of the "superstitions" of sailors? Who that has visited Catholic countries abroad, has not observed, in sea-port towns, the Christian counterpart of the "*votiva tabella*" of Horace, in the ships and other specimens of nautical ingenuity hung up in churches as a perennial memento of deliverance, an offering in honour of that blessed one, whom the Catholic mariner delights to hymn as the mild and auspicious "*Star of ocean* ;"<sup>3</sup> and in our own England too, although the larger sea-port towns are, for want of some powerful religious check, for the most part, it is to be feared, very dens of iniquity, yet the case is said to be much otherwise in the little fishing-towns scattered along the coast, at a distance from the metropolis, the male portion of the population of which are for weeks out at sea, in open

<sup>3</sup> "*Ave maris Stella*," &c.

boats, at the constant risk of their lives. In many of these places the men are said to be, as a body, so naturally religious that it is rather the attempt to eradicate, than to implant, devout impressions which is apt to fail of success. "They that go down to the sea in ships and occupy their business in great waters; these men see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep."<sup>5</sup> The changeful ocean and the tranquil sky are, to simple and affectionate hearts, better than many sermons. "*Mirabiles elationes maris, mirabilis in altis Dominus.*"<sup>6</sup> And very deeply plunged in the mire of sin must that soul be, which the astonishing "providences" of a sea life do not arouse from its torpor, and lift up, though but for a moment, to Heaven.

It should not then be difficult for any one to enter into the wonderful religious experiences, of which, seven centuries ago, the sea was continually felt to be the place, and its incidents the medium. Many a hair-breadth escape and unlooked-for intervention which, even in these days, would go by the name of a providence, was then referred directly to the class of miracles. Indeed there is a kind of miracle for which the word "providence" is but a synonyme, convenient for the purposes of reserve; and it will be readily understood that wherever the doctrine of the Communion of Saints is vividly realized, and their patronage regarded as an effectual help, signal deliverances will come to be viewed as the fruit of direct interpositions.

Among those with which the name of St Augustine of Canterbury was connected, a foremost place is given by Gocelin to the wonderful preservation of king Canute from perils of the sea, on his return from his

<sup>5</sup> Ps. cvii. 23, 24, &c.

<sup>6</sup> Ps. xcii. 6. (Vulg.)



great pilgrimage to Rome. A terrible storm is said to have overtaken him when he was just within sight of the English shore. He betook himself to St. Augustine, whose favour he had experienced throughout his travels, and vowed large gifts to his shrine. Soon after, the storm ceased, and the vessel got safe to shore.

A somewhat similar intervention was vouchsafed in the case of Egelvius, abbot of Ethelingey, who had also been to Rome to pay his devotions at the tomb of the Apostles. On his return home, he and his companions were detained six full weeks by contrary winds, during which time their money was all expended in the purchase of necessaries, and they were obliged to sell their horses and apparel. At length one of the party, a monk, named Withgar, of age and prudence, encouraged the Abbot to look for help from the guardianship and intercessions of his island Saints, and besought him to implore their good offices. The Abbot complied, and chiefly betook himself to St. Augustine, who held a first place among the holy patrons of England, vowing that should he ever again be granted a sight of his loved abbey, he would erect from the foundation a tower to the honour of God, under his tutelage. Then falling asleep, there appeared to him a ship rapidly approaching him, in which was one of priestly dignity and heavenly beauty, clad in shining vestments, who waved his hand to the home-sick pilgrims as if inviting them to him. Then the Abbot awoke, and while he was relating the vision to his companion, the pilot rushed in full of joy, with the tidings that a favourable breeze had sprung up, and that no time was to be lost. The ship reached England in safety. The Abbot, upon his arrival, repaired to Canterbury, where the hospitable successor of our Saint received him with open arms,

and like a worthy steward of the bounty of such a father, set himself to make good the losses of his guest.

The good Abbot was faithful to his vow, and laid the foundation of his tower. He obtained, not without difficulty, six great beams ; the seventh, long refused, was at last given for love of the Saint. When they came to measure it, it was found half a yard too short ; and the Abbot, not without hope that the Saint might once more grant him his aid, measured it again, and found it now as much too long as it had been before too short. His workman was about to make it the right length ; but this the Abbot would by no means allow, as esteeming it a disrespect to the Saint's overflowing bounty, of which he decided that the tower should remain a monument to future generations. The biographer adds that it was standing in his time.

One more history shall be related under the same head. Elfnoth, a member of one of the principal families in London, had been brought up from his childhood in St. Augustine's under the care of Abbot Ulfric. He had been staying in Normandy with Duke William, and was on his return to England, when, midway across the Channel, a storm arose. The ship was wrecked, and all perished, with the single exception of young Elfnoth, who ceased not to call on his holy father for help ; when, at length descriing a broken mast in the water, he threw himself upon it and there remained, the sport of the waves. His faith was tried for two whole days and nights ; the third morning dawned in serenity, and he was rescued from death by a friendly vessel from the Norman coast.

Gocelin also speaks of certain monks of St. Augustine's, contemporaries of his own, and alive when he wrote, who had made the following statement upon their oaths,

On a certain year, about Pentecost, they were on their way from Constantinople to Venice, and had on board 150 men, many of them learned clergy and laymen, besides a number of others. The wind rose, and became so strong as to endanger a vessel thus heavily laden. They took in their sails, and, availing themselves of the first anchorage they found, remained for several days exposed to the violent beating of the waves. It so happened, in the year in question, that the festival of St. Augustine fell during Whitsuntide, and various were the feelings under which the holy brethren looked forward to its near approach at so trying and anxious a time. On the one hand, it was a grief to them that they must celebrate it to such disadvantage; on the other, they could not but esteem it providential that a season so full of promise should befall at such a moment. It happened that on board were several Greeks as well as Italians, and it was a great delight to the holy brethren to spend the mean season in recounting to them the history of the Saint whose day was coming on. They told how the illustrious Gregory, Augustine's spiritual father, had been connected with those very parts, having lived for some time at Constantinople in the capacity of nuntio of the Apostolic See; and how, out of his great charity to the English nation, he had sent this Augustine to preach Christ among them. With such delightful converse did they beguile the weary time; and at length the whole party on board were wrought into a kind of enthusiasm at the prospect of honouring God in Augustine, spiritual child of Gregory, and apostle of the English nation. They added, that among all the Saints of their own country, there was not one so powerful in his intercession, so large in his munificence, as blessed Augustine; neither did they doubt that, should the

crew join in commemorating him with a holy unanimity, some mighty deliverance might be expected to follow. The next Sunday was the day of his festival, and whatever outward accompaniments of ceremonial splendour there lacked, were more than supplied by the overflowing joy of the heart. The Vespers of the Saint were chanted by the numerous body of priests and clerics, all the crew assisting at the service, and then the night was spent in watching, with prayer and praise. But the narrative must be continued in the glowing words of the biographer. "The ship was our church, its mast the watch-tower of Sion; the sail-yard our cross, the sails our drapery, the prow our altar, the priest, boatswain, the arch-priest, pilot, the rowers clerics; the creaking cables our instruments of music, the whistlings of the wind our bellows and pipes. Around us were the spacious courts of ocean, and the countless multitude of the waves responded to the voice of the chanters by their incessant dashings. The church of the waters resounded with the note, 'O ye seas and floods, bless ye the Lord, bless Him O ye whales and all that move in the waters,' and the waters joined in the response with the quires above; all sang of Christ in high solemnity, and of Augustine, servant of Christ."

Lauds were chanted towards daybreak, and then all retired to rest except the helmsman. He remained observing the stars, and trying the wind. On a sudden it came home to him that St. Augustine's agency had been blessed. The violent wind subsided into the softest of breezes, and that a favourable one. He blew his whistle and shouted aloud, and for a moment the sleepers doubted whether all were not over. But a moment after they were greeted with the joyful words; "Up, comrades; God is with us;" and the pilot continued, "It

is St. Augustine, whose Feast we are keeping; he is helmsman, boatswain, master, and all." All were speedily on the alert, and Mass was sung in high jubilee.

Gocelin relates many other histories of the same description. One more only shall be selected. In the village of Chilham, not far from Canterbury, was a little girl, eight years of age, the hope and comfort of a widowed mother. She was the life and spirit of her home; but some sad chance befel her, by which she lost the power of speech. Her mother, instead of having recourse to a human physician, took her to the parish priest, by name Elfelm, who addressed her as follows:—"The Feast of St. Augustine is at hand; go then and prepare a waxen taper, and with it watch out the vigil of that day, whereon the Day-spring from on high first visited us; and let your child be the companion of your prayers. If you will but persevere in faith, we verily believe that, through God's goodness, you will not be disappointed. The devout matron, armed with faith, and as at the bidding of an angel, is ready with the light on the appointed day, and repairs with her child to the shrine of her heavenly physician, where both keep vigil in prayer before the health-giving pledges of the Saint. The mother prays and utters her complaints aloud; the daughter can but sigh and vent her devotion and her grief in low inarticulate sounds: but the ears of the Saint are open to both. Now swell on high, at the close of matins, the solemn words of the hymn to the Thrice-Holy, the Abbot entoning the first notes, and his children of the monastery taking up the strain in chorus. When they came to the words, 'The Holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge Thee,' the tongue of the damsel was suddenly loosened, and she was able to bear her part in the chorus of the

Universal Church. Matins and Lauds being ended, the whole company repeated *Te Deum* as an act of praise to God for the mercies whereof all had just been witnesses.

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And now what remains but humbly to trust that our Lord will turn a pitying eye on our much-loved England, and hear the prayers of her patrons and benefactors in her behalf, that her children may once more "look unto the Rock whence they were hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence they were digged?"<sup>1</sup>... "O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against Thee.... O Lord, according to all Thy righteousness, we beseech Thee, let Thine anger and Thy fury be turned away from Thy city Jerusalem, Thy holy mountain : because for our sins and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of Thy servant and his supplications, and cause Thy face to shine upon Thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline Thine ear and hear ; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city that is called by Thy name ; for we do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousness, but for Thy great mercies. O Lord, hear ; O Lord, forgive ; O Lord, hearken and do ; defer not, for Thine own sake,...for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name."

"O God, Thou hast cast us out, and scattered us abroad : Thou hast also been displeased ; O turn Thee

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah li. 1.

unto us again....Thou hast moved the land and divided it : heal the sores thereof, for it shaketh. Thou hast shewed Thy people heavy things ; Thou hast given us a drink of deadly wine."

" O remember not our old sins, but have mercy upon us, and that soon, for we are come to great misery. Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Thy name : O deliver us for Thy name's sake. Wherefore do the heathen say, Where is now their God ?...O let the sorrowful sighing of the prisoners come before Thee ; according to the greatness of Thy power preserve Thou those that are appointed to die....So we that are Thy people, and the sheep of Thy pasture, shall give Thee thanks for ever ; and will alway be shewing forth Thy praise from generation to generation." <sup>2</sup> Amen.

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<sup>2</sup> Dan. ix. ; Ps. lx., lxxix.

## APPENDIX.

[The following account of the MS., of which a facsimile is printed below, is given by a learned Member of the University of Oxford.]

The MS. in the Bodleian (from the library of Kenelm Digby) is of the thirteenth century, and early in it. The story is quoted from a Life of St. Augustine. I have collated the first with the copy in the Life of St. Thomas of Canterbury, which is a later MS. The two are not, I think, copies of the same individual MS., but they are from the same general text. However, the original must be older than the older one of the two. There is another copy in the Library of University College.

### E CODICE K. DIGBÆI 149.

#### IN VITA BEATI AUGUSTINI ANGLORUM APOSTOLI DE EXCOMMUNICATIONE PRO DECIMIS.

Est vicus in agro Oxfordensi VI. miliaris distans a loco hac tempestate celebri qui dicitur Wodestoke Cummatoria nomine. Igitur cum beatus Augustinus Divini Verbi semina ex more gentibus erogando pervenisset, accessit ad eum ejusdem villæ presbyter, dicens; Reverende pater et domine suggero sanctitati tuæ quod hujus fundi dominus multimoda a me exhortatione commonitus, nullatenus adquiescit, ut sanctæ Dei ecclesiæ ex hiis quæ superna ei confert largitas decimas



velit persolvere, et excommunicationis insuper sententiam sepiissime in eum jacula[ri] comminatus, eo amplius rebellem et obstinatum reperi. Provideat ergo sanctitas vestra quid inde facturum sit. Quod audiens Sanctus Augustinus precepit militem accersiri ante se. Cui et dixit, Quid hoc fili quod audio de te? Cur decimas tuas Deo omnium bonorum largitori et sancte ecclesie reddere recusas? An ignoras quia decimæ non tue sed Dei sunt? Prompto ergo et libenti animo et cum gratiarum actione Deo omnipotenti debitum persolve, ne anno sequenti unde tribuas pro obstinatione tua severa districti iudicis tibi subtrahat sententia. Ad hoc miles iracundie stimulis agitatus viro Dei respondit. Quis inquit domine terram excoluit? Quis semen ad serendum præstitit? vel fruges jam ad maturitatem perventas metere fecit? Nonne ego? Hoc igitur noverint omnes, quia ejus erit decimus manipulus cujus erunt et novem. Cui Sanctus Aug<sup>s</sup>. Noli inquit fili ita loqui, non enim ignorare te volo quod si fidelium consuetudinem sanctorum patrum traditionem decimas tuas dare recusaveris, absque dubio excommunicabo te. Et hiis dictis conversus ad mensam Dominicam ut misteria divina celebraret, coram omni populo clara voce dixit, Ex parte Dei præcipio ne aliquis excommunicatus missarum solemniis [al. solemnii] interesse præsumat. Quod cum dixisset, res miranda et retro acta et [al. retroactis] inaudita seculis contigit. Nam in ipso introitu ecclesie cadaver sepultum se erigens atque cimiterium egrediens ibidem stabat immobile quamdiu sanctus vir missarum solemniam celebrabat. Quibus expletis fideles qui ibi præsentés erant fere extra se positi venerunt ad beatum pontificem et rem gestam trementes ex ordine pandunt. Quibus ait, Nolite pavere, sed præcedat nos cum

aqua a nobis consecrata crucis Dominicæ vexillum, et videamus quid hoc sit quod nobis ostensum est. Precedens autem pius pastor oves Christi pavefactas pervenit cum eis ad ingressum cimiterii, vidensque cadaver tetrum et deforme sic inquit, Precipio tibi in nomine Domini quatenus indices mihi quis sis, ut [al. vel] cur ad illudendum populum Christi huc veneris. Cui respondit, Non ad terrorem huic populo incutendum, vel ut eis illuderem sanctissime pater Augustine huc veni; sed cum ex parte Dei juberet ne aliquis excommunicatus missarum solempniis interesset, angeli Domini qui itineris tui assidue comites assistunt ejece- runt me de loco ubi positus fueram sepultus, dicentes, quod amicus Dei Augustinus carnes fetentes de ecclesia jussisset proici. Ego enim tempore Britonum, antequam gentilium Anglorum furor hanc vastasset regionem, hujus ville patronus fui, etiam licet sepius ab hujus ecclesie presbitero commonitus fueram, tamen dare decimas meas nunquam consensi. Ad ultimum vero excommunicationis ab eo mulctatus sententia me miserum inter hoc de medio sublatus sum et quia in eis nullus resistere potuit in loco de quo surrexi intra ecclesiam sepultus, animam ad claustra infernalium gehennalibus jugiter cruciendam incendiis emisi. Tunc flentibus omnibus qui aderant et hoc audierant ipse sanctus lacrimis faciem ubertim irrorans crebrisque singultibus dolorem cordis ostendens, Scis inquit locum ubi sepultus fuit presbiter qui te excommunicavit? Quo respondente quod bene sciret, et quod in eodem cimiterio monumentum haberet, dixit archiepiscopus, Precede ergo nos et nobis locum demonstra. Precessit igitur defunctus veniensque ad locum quendam prope ecclesiam ubi omnino nullum adhuc signum alicujus sepulturæ apparebat, sequente se Au-

gustino populoque universo clara voce dixit, Ecce locus, hic si placet fodite et presbiteri de quo me interrogatis ossa poteritis invenire. Ex jussu ergo pontificis ceperunt quidam fodere, et tandem in alto defosso loco pauca invenerunt ossa et ipsa præ temporis diurnitate in viriditatem conversa. Sciscitante autem Dei servo si hæc essent presbiteri ossa, respondit defunctus, Etiam domine. Tunc Sanctus Augustinus fusa diutius oratione dixit, Ut cognoscant omnes quia mors et vita in manibus Dei sunt cui nichil est impossibile in ejus nomine dico Frater surge opus enim te habemus. Res stupenda, et humanis auribus inaudita, ad jussionem enim almissimi præsulis videbant omnes qui aderant pulverem pulveri uniri et ossa nervis compaginari, ac sic demum humanum corpus de sepulcro amotum erigi. Cumque ante beatum virum staret, Cognoscis, inquit, istum frater? Qui respondit, Novi pater, et utinam non nossem. Et adjecit almificus præsul, Tu eum anathemate ligasti? Ligavi, ait, et digne pro meritis. In omnibus enim sanctæ ecclesie semper rebellis extitit decimarum retentor, multorum insuper flagitiorum usque ad diem ultimum patrator. Tunc vir Dei Augustinus altius ingemiscens, Nosti, inquit, frater, quia miserationes Dei super omnia opera ejus. Unde et nos misereri simul et compati oportet creaturæ et imagini Dei, que ejus pretioso redempta sanguine tam longo jam tempore tenebroso reclusa in carcere penas sustinuit gehennales. Tunc tradidit ei flagellum, et flexis ante illum genibus absolutione flebiliter petita, mortuus mortuum magno gratie Dei dono ad declarandum servi Augustini merita relaxavit. Quo absoluto præcepit sanctus pater noster ut sepulcrum rediens in pace diem præstolaretur ultimum. Qui statim ad locum unde surrexisse visus est reversus mausoleum intravit,

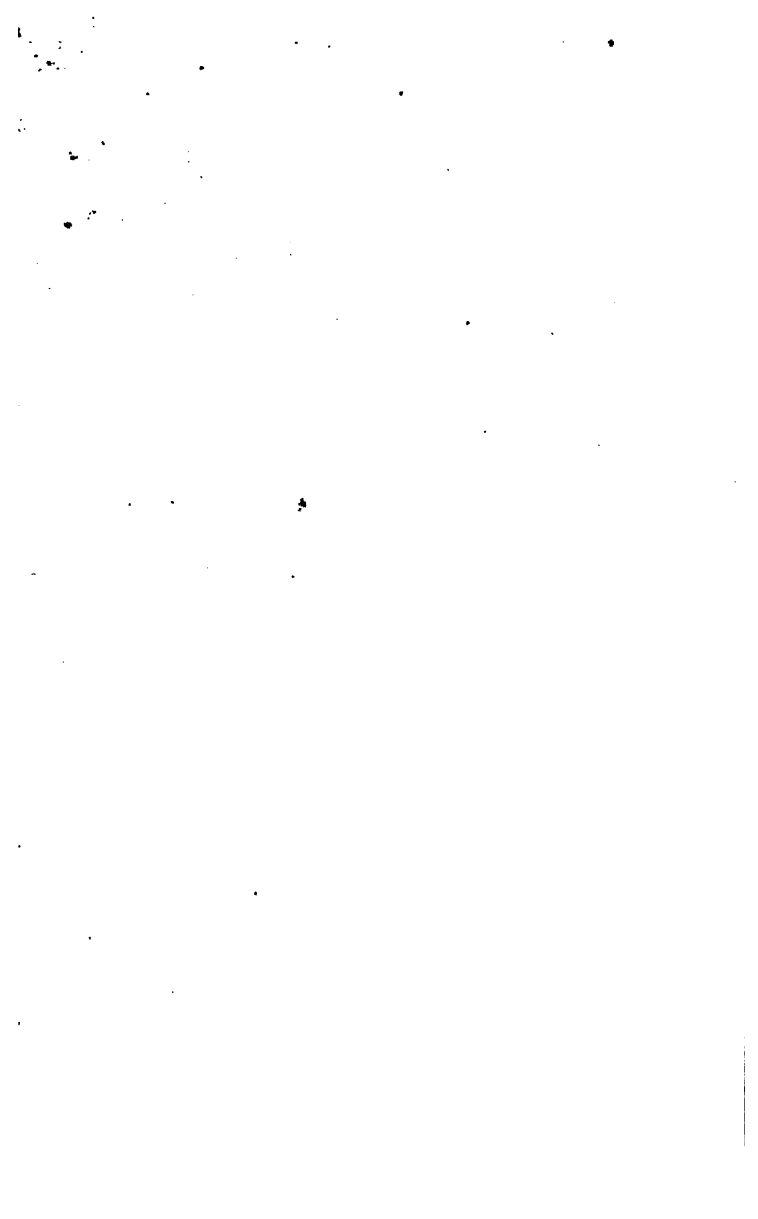
in cinereamque pulverem protinus est resolutus. Tunc ait presbitero sanctus. Quantum tempus est ex quo hic jacuisti? Qui respondit c. l. [centum quinquaginta anni] et eo amplius sunt. Quomodo, inquit, huc usque fuisti? Bene ait in gaudio Domini mei constitutus, eterne vite deliciis interfui. Visne ait ut communem pro te exorem Dominum quatenus ad nos iterum revertaris, simulque animas diabolica fraude deceptas evangelii nobiscum verba serendo ad suum Creatorem reducas? Absit, inquit, a te venerabilis pater ne me a quiete mea perturbatum ad seculi laboriosam simulque erumpnosam reverti facias vitam. O magna et plena de Dei misericordia præsumptio. O gloriosa præcellentissimi cordis conscientia que Deum ita potentem et misericordem et de Deo tantum promeruisse non dubitavit ut tam magnificum tamque stupendum pro eo facere dignaretur miraculum. Hoc forte illi videbitur incredibile qui Deo aliquid esse impossibile credit. Sed tamen nulli dubium est quod nunquam Anglorum dure cervices Christi jugo subjici nisi per magna consenserunt miracula. Porro Sanctus Augustinus, presbitero non consentiente hujus vite vias iterum ingredi, dixit, Vade karissime frater, et per longa annorum tempora quiesce in pace. Simulque ora pro me et pro universa sancta Dei ecclesia. Qui statim sepulcrum intrans favilla et cinis effectus est. Tunc accersivit ad se militem sanctus episcopus cui et dixit, Quid est fili. Adhuc decimas tuas Deo reddere consentis? An adhuc in obstinacia tua perdurare disponis? Tremefactus autem miles procidit ad pedes ejus flens et ejulans, et reatum suum confitens et veniam petens. Relictisque omnibus komam disposuit. Beatum Augustinum omnibus diebus vite sue tanquam salutis sue auctorem secutus in omnibus; mentis et corporis puritate consummatus diem clausit

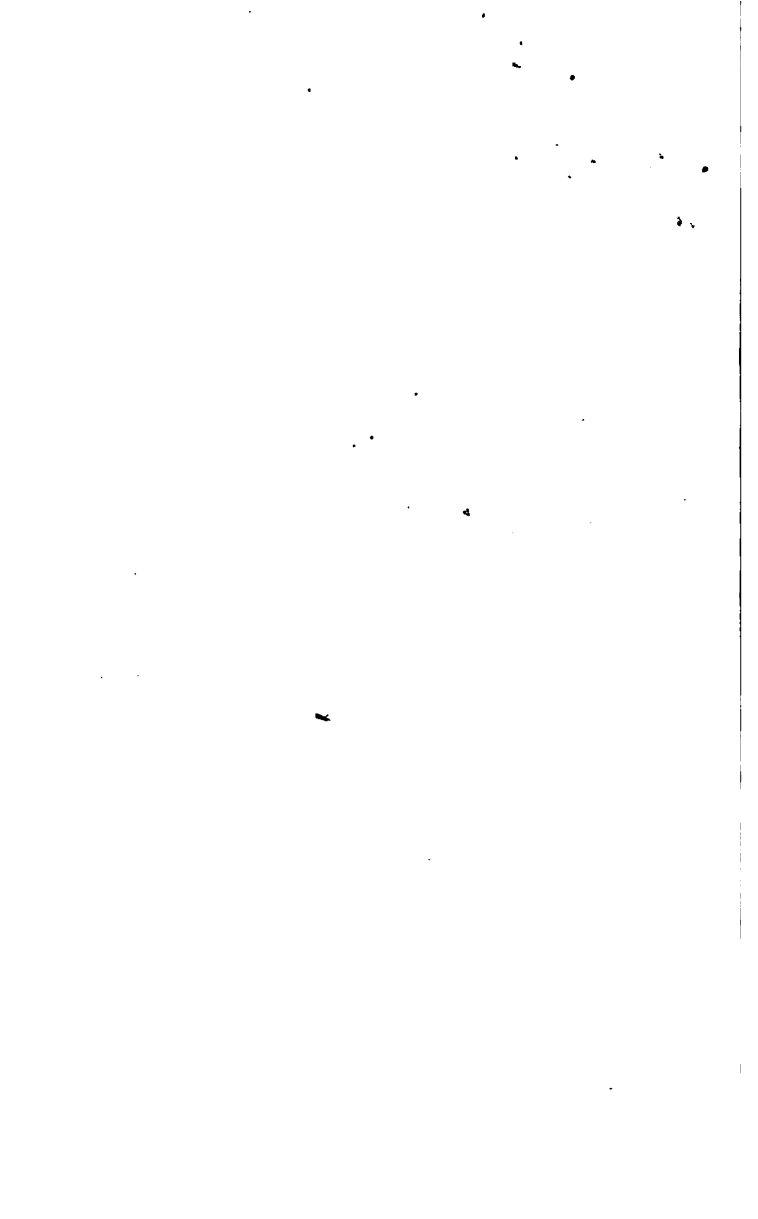
ultimum, et eterne felicitatis gaudia sine fine victurus intravit. Quod nobis præstare dignetur IHS KPS Dominus noster Qui cum Pře et S̃pu Sancto vivit et regnat Deus in secula seculorum.—Amen.

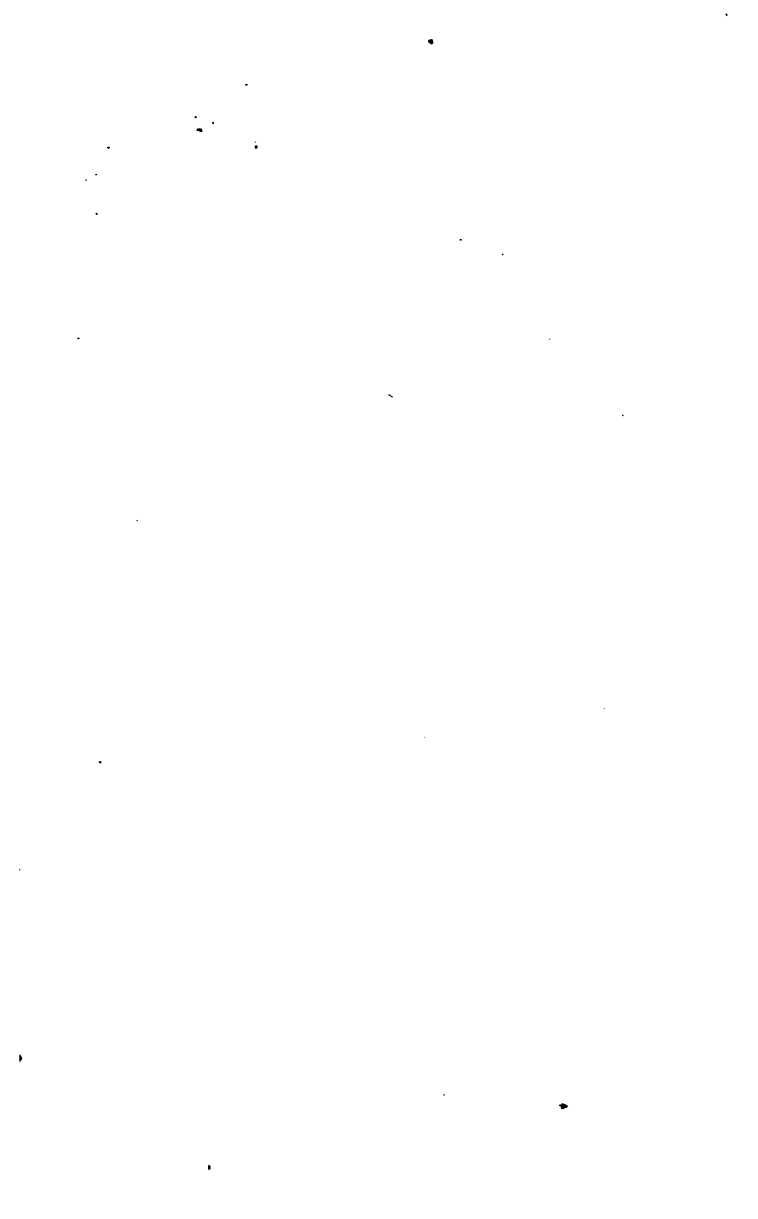
THE END.

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